

# **Horizon**

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND ART

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**'GOOD NEWS! GOD IS LOVE!'**

*by* HENRY MILLER

**AUGUSTUS HARE, 1834-1903**

*by* NANCY MITFORD

**RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT OF THE FIRST  
YEARS OF OUR CENTURY**

*by* M. D. PETRE

**THE EVOLUTION OF THE DOUBLE HEAD  
IN THE ART OF PICASSO**

*by* ROBERT MELVILLE

**THE FREEDOM OF NECESSITY—IV (Conclusion)**

*by* ARCHIMEDES

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# HORIZON

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## ABOUT THIS NUMBER

HENRY MILLER, who lived in Paris for ten years and wrote *Tropic of Cancer* and *Tropic of Capricorn* there, returned to America in 1940. He wrote a book about Greece, *The Colossus of Maroussi*, which Secker and Warburg are bringing out and, in *HORIZON*, 'Reflections on Writing'. He then set out round the United States to write a travel book, *Air-Conditioned Nightmare*, of which we print a pre-Pearl Harbour fragment. In case any reader considers 'Good News! God is Love!' to be our 'tu quoque' to the article in *Life*, we would point out that there is nothing Henry Miller says of America that is not true of England (see Lawrence, *passim*, and Orwell). It is important that we remember that though, until we have defeated Hitler, we cannot begin to live, until we have cured Western civilization of the diseases which are the effect of the industrial revolution (for which England was responsible) we can have nothing to live for.

Miss Petre, who is the last survivor of the 'modernist' group round Von Hügel and Father Tyrrell, has a book on Loisy coming out. Robert Melville, a young Birmingham writer, is also author of *Picasso: Master of the Phantom*.

The Christmas Number of *HORIZON* will include a further instalment of Augustus John's Autobiography, the first of three articles on Boswell by Peter Quennell, and an account of a girl's day in a munition factory by Mass Observation, 'Fuseli' by Ruthven Todd, a story by Maclaren Ross.

Will subscribers who find it a trouble to renew their subscriptions take note of our Banker's Order?

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MICHAEL BARSLEY

## RURAL SUNDAY

WITH vacant stare in the market square,  
Tricked out in a lilac suit,  
The villager stands with great red hands  
And chaffs with a raw recruit.  
The heat comes down on a sleepy town  
Like a blanket over the head,  
And a church clock beats in the silent streets  
Saying 'Dead, dead, dead.'

The *News of the World* is at last unfurled  
In the strait-lace-curtained window.  
Far from the steeple they read in the *People*  
The words of the prophet Lyndoe.

Yesterday's rape was a fine escape  
But today there are tales more thrilling,  
Atrocity stories for people whose war is  
A matter of endless killing.

Back from their pews in time for the News  
The faithful flock has hastened,  
For the polished word of an Oxford Third  
Has left them cheerfully chastened.  
Respectable mattins in suits and satins  
Is not for the wretched sinner,  
But for those who nod to a friendly God  
And go to a well-cooked dinner.

The flicks are shut and a volunteer hut  
Is the only building alive,  
Where a colonel's niece in a smart two-piece  
Serves cups of tea till five.  
For those browned-off this attractive toff  
Adds zest to a dreary day,  
But the tin doors close and away she goes  
And the world is suddenly grey.

The hour of seven is just like heaven,  
The moment of wishful drinking!  
Giggling wenches on bar-room benches  
Can guess what the boys are thinking.  
Shropshire lads look a bunch of cads  
As they jingle the week-end cash,  
And girls on munitions in certain conditions  
Regret they were once so rash.

Oh, the *Hare and Hounds* may be out of bounds  
To all below rank of sergeant,  
But the barmaid's charms at the *Talbot Arms*  
Shine gules on a face of argent.  
The men say 'cheers' to a round of beers  
And Waafs have a gin and lime,  
And the same again till the clock strikes ten  
Saying 'Time, time, time'.

Night must fall but there's nothing at all  
To disturb their accustomed slumber.  
They peacefully snore in the midst of war  
An intact and eclectic number.  
There comes no ghost to the Wardens' Post  
To break the eternal lull,  
And to folk like me when the clock strikes three  
It's dull, dull, dull.

W. R. RODGERS

## THE SWAN

BOTTOMED by tugging combs of water  
The slow and loath swan slews and looks  
Coldly down through chutes of stilled chatter  
Upon the shadows in flight among the stones.

Into abashed confusions of ooze  
It dips, and from the muddy fume  
The filtered and flute-like fishes rise  
Endlessly up through all their octaves of gloom,

To where the roofed swan suavely swings  
Without qualm on the footling wave  
That laves it on, with elbowing wings swelled  
Wide under its eyes' held look and architrave.

Slow slow it slides, as if not to chafe  
The even sleeve of its approach  
Stretched stiff and oval in front of it,  
Siphoning it on, selfless, silent and safe.

Jonquil-long its neck adjudicates  
Its body's course, aloof and cool  
It cons the nonchalant face of air  
With its incurious and dispassionate stare.

On that grey lake frilled round with scuffings  
Of foam, and milled with muttering,  
I saw, lingering late and lightless,  
A single swan swinging, sleek like a sequin.

Negligently bright, wide wings pinned back,  
It mooned on the moving water,  
And not all the close and gartering dark  
Or levering winds could lift or flatter

That small and dimming image into flight.  
Far from shore and free from foresight  
Coiled in its own indifferent mood  
It held the heavens, shores, waters and all their brood.



HENRY MILLER

# ‘GOOD NEWS! GOD IS LOVE!’

It was in a hotel in Pittsburgh that I finished the *Life of Ramakrishna* by Romain Rolland. Pittsburgh and Ramakrishna—could any more violent contrast be possible? The one the symbol of brutal power and wealth, the other the very incarnation of love and wisdom.

We begin here, then, in the very quick of the nightmare, in the crucible where all values are reduced to slag.

I am in a small, supposedly comfortable room of a modern hotel equipped with all the latest conveniences. The bed is clean and soft, the shower functions perfectly, the toilet seat has been sterilized since the last occupancy, if I am to believe what is printed on the paper band which garlands it; soap, towels, lights, stationery, everything is provided in abundance.

I am depressed, depressed beyond words. If I were to occupy this room for any length of time I would go mad—or commit suicide. The spirit of the place, the spirit of the men who made it the hideous city it is, seeps through the walls. There is murder in the air. It suffocates me.

A few moments ago I went out to get a breath of air. I was back again in Czarist Russia. I saw Ivan the Terrible followed by a cavalcade of snouted brutes. There they were, the Cossacks, armed with clubs and revolvers. They had the look of men who obey with zest, who shoot to kill on the slightest provocation. The very sight of them inspires hatred and rebellion. One longs to pull them down off their prancing steeds and bash their thick skulls in. One wants to put an end to this sort of law and order.

Never has the *status quo* seemed more hideous to me. This is not the worst place, I know. But I am here and what I see hits me hard.

It was fortunate, perhaps, that I didn't begin my tour of America via Pittsburgh, Youngstown, Detroit; fortunate that I didn't start out by visiting Bayonne, Bethlehem, Scranton and such like.

I might never have gotten as far as Chicago. I might have turned into a human bomb and exploded. By some canny instinct of self-preservation I turned south first, to explore the so-called 'backward' States of the Union. If I was bored for the most part I at least knew peace. Did I not see suffering and misery in the south too? Of course I did. There is suffering and misery everywhere throughout this broad land. But there are kinds and degrees of suffering; the worst, in my opinion, is the sort one encounters in the very heart of progress.

At this moment we are talking about the defence of our country, our institutions, our way of life. It is taken for granted that these *must* be defended, whether we are invaded or not. But there are things which ought not to be defended, which ought to be allowed to die; there are things which we should destroy voluntarily, with our own hands.

Let us try to make an imaginative recapitulation. Let us try to think back to the days when our forefathers first came to these shores. To begin with they were running away from something; like the exiles and expatriates whom we are in the habit of denigrating and reviling, they too had abandoned the homeland in search of something nearer to their heart's desire.

One of the curious things about these progenitors of ours is that though avowedly searching for peace and happiness, for political and religious freedom, they began by robbing, poisoning, murdering, almost exterminating the race to whom this vast continent belonged. Later, when the gold rush started, they did the same to the Mexicans as they had to the Indians. And when the Mormons sprang up they practised the same cruelties, the same intolerance and persecution upon their own white brothers.

I think of these ugly facts because as I was riding from Pittsburgh to Youngstown, through an Inferno which exceeds anything that Dante imagined, the idea suddenly came to me that I ought to have an American Indian by my side, that he ought to share this voyage with me, communicate to me silently or otherwise his emotions and reflections. By preference I would like to have had a descendant of one of the admittedly 'civilized' Indian tribes, a Seminole, let us say, who had passed his life in the tangled swamps of Florida.

Imagine the two of us then standing in contemplation before the hideous grandeur of one of those steel mills which dot the



railway line. I can almost hear him thinking—'so it was for this that you deprived us of our birthright, took away our slaves, burned our homes, massacred our women and children, poisoned our souls, broke every treaty which you made with us to die in the swamps and jungles of the Everglades!'

Do you think it would be easy to get him to change places with one of our steady workers? What sort of persuasion would you use? What now could you promise him that would be truly seductive? A used car that he could drive to work in? A slap-board shack that he could, if he were ignorant enough, call a home? An education for his children which would lift them out of vice, ignorance and superstition but still keep them in slavery? A clean, healthy life in the midst of poverty, crime, filth, disease and fear? Wages that barely keep your head above water and often not? Radio, telephone, cinema, newspaper, pulp magazine, fountain pen, wrist watch, vacuum cleaner or other gadgets *ad infinitum*? Are these the baubles that make life worth while? Are these what make us happy, care-free, generous-hearted, sympathetic, kindly, peaceful and godly? Are we now prosperous and secure, as so many stupidly dream of being? Are any of us, even the richest and most powerful, certain that an adverse wind will not sweep away our possessions, our authority, the fear or the respect in which we are held?

This frenzied activity which has us all, rich and poor, weak and powerful, in its grip—where is it leading us? There are two things in life which it seems to me all men want and very few ever get (because both of them belong to the domain of the spiritual) and they are health and freedom. The druggist, the doctor, the surgeon are all powerless to give health; money, power, security, authority do not give freedom. Education can never provide wisdom, nor churches religion, nor wealth happiness, nor security peace. What is the meaning of our activity then? To what end?

We are not only as ignorant, as superstitious, as vicious in our conduct as the 'ignorant, bloodthirsty savages' whom we dispossessed and annihilated upon arriving here—we are worse than they by far. We have degenerated; we have degraded the life which we sought to establish on this continent. The most productive nation in the world, yet unable to properly feed, clothe and shelter over a third of its population. Vast areas of

valuable soil turning to waste land because of neglect, indifference, greed and vandalism. Torn some eighty years ago by the bloodiest civil war in the history of man and yet to this day unable to convince the defeated section of our country of the righteousness of our cause, nor able, as liberators and emancipators of the slaves, to give them true freedom and equality, but instead enslaving and degrading our own white brothers. Yes, the industrial North defeated the aristocratic South—the fruits of that victory are now apparent. Wherever there is industry there is ugliness, misery, oppression, gloom and despair. The banks which grew rich by piously teaching us to save, in order to swindle us with our own money, now beg us not to bring our savings to them, threatening to wipe out even that ridiculous interest rate they now offer should we disregard their advice. Three-quarters of the world's gold lies buried in Kentucky. Inventions which would throw millions more out of work, since by the queer irony of our system every potential boon to the human race is converted into an evil, lie idle on the shelves of the Patent Office or are bought up and destroyed by the powers that control our destiny. The land thinly populated and producing in wasteful, haphazard way enormous surpluses of every kind, is deemed by its owners, a mere handful of men, unable to accommodate not only the starving millions of Europe but our own starving hordes. A country which makes itself ridiculous by sending out missionaries to the most remote parts of the globe, asking for pennies now of the poor in order to maintain the Christian work of these deluded devils who no more represent Christ than I do the Pope, and yet unable through its churches and missions at home to rescue the weak and defeated, the miserable and the oppressed. The hospitals, the insane asylums, the prisons filled to overflowing. Counties, some of them bigger as a European country, practically uninhabited, owned by an intangible corporation whose tentacles reach everywhere and whose responsibilities nobody can formulate or clarify. A man seated in a comfortable chair in New York, Chicago or San Francisco, a man surrounded by every luxury and yet paralysed with fear and anxiety, controls the lives and destinies of thousands of men and women whom he has never seen, whom he never wishes to see and whose fate he is thoroughly uninterested in.

This is what is called progress in the year 1941 in these United

States of America. Since I am not of Indian, Negro or Mexican descent I do not derive any vengeful joy in delineating this picture of the white man's civilization. I am a descendant of two men who ran away from their native land because they did not wish to become soldiers. My descendants, ironically enough, will no longer be able to escape that duty; the whole white world has at last been turned into an armed camp.

Well, as I was saying, I was full of Ramakrishna on leaving Pittsburgh. Ramakrishna who never criticized, who never preached, who accepted all religions, who saw God everywhere in everything: the most ecstatic being, I imagine, that ever lived. Then came Coraopolis, Aliquippa, Wampum. Then Niles, the birth-place of President McKinley, and Warren, the birthplace of Kenneth Patchen. Then Youngstown, and two girls are descending the bluff beside the railroad tracks in the most fantastic setting I have laid eyes on since I left Crete. Instantly I am back on that ancient Greek island, standing at the edge of a crowd on the outskirts of Heraklion just a few miles from Knossus. There is no railroad on the island, the sanitation is bad, the dust is thick, the flies are everywhere, the food is lousy—but it is a wonderful place, one of the most wonderful places in the whole world. As at Youngstown by the railroad station there is a bluff here and a Greek peasant woman is slowly descending, a basket on her head, her feet bare, her body poised. *Here the resemblance ends. . . .*

As everybody knows, Ohio has given the country more Presidents than any other State in the Union. Presidents like McKinley, Hayes, Garfield, Grant, Harding—weak, characterless men. It has also given us writers like Sherwood Anderson<sup>1</sup> and Kenneth Patchen, the one looking for poetry everywhere and the other driven almost mad by the evil and ugliness everywhere. The one walks the streets at night in solitude and tells us of the imaginary life going on behind closed doors; the other is so stricken with pain and chagrin by what he sees that he re-creates the cosmos in terms of blood and tears, stands it upside down, and walks out on it in loathing and disgust. I am glad I had the chance to see these Ohio towns, this Mahoning River which looks as if the poisonous bile of all humanity had poured into it, though in truth it may contain nothing more evil than the

<sup>1</sup> Written before his death.



chemicals and waste products of the mills and factories. I am glad I had the chance to see the colour of the earth here in winter; a colour not of age and death but of disease and sorrow. Glad I could take in the rhinoceros-skinned banks that rise from the river's edge and in the pale light of a wintry afternoon reflect the lunacy of a planet given over to rivalry and hatred. Glad I caught a glimpse of those slag heaps which look like the accumulated droppings of sickly prehistoric monsters which passed in the night. It helps me to understand the black and monstrous poetry which the younger man distils in order to preserve his sanity; helps me to understand why the older writer had to pretend madness in order to escape the prison which he found himself in when he was working in the paint factory. It helps me to understand how prosperity built on this plane of life can make Ohio the mother of Presidents and the persecutor of men of genius.

The saddest sight of all are the automobiles parked outside the mills and factories. The automobile stands out in my mind as the very symbol of falsity and illusion. There they are, thousands upon thousands of them, in such profusion that it would seem as if no man were too poor to own one. In Europe, Asia, Africa the toiling masses of humanity look with watery eyes towards this Paradise where the worker rides to work in his own car. What a magnificent world of opportunity it must be, they think to themselves. (At least, we like to think that they think that way!) They never ask what one must do to have this great boon. They don't realize that when the American worker steps out of his shining tin chariot he delivers himself body and soul to the most stultifying labour a man can perform. They have no idea, that it is possible, even when one works under the best possible conditions, to forfeit all rights as a human being. They don't know that the best possible conditions (in American lingo) mean the biggest profits for the boss, the utmost servitude for the worker, the greatest confusion and disillusionment for the public in general. They see a beautiful, shining car which purrs like a cat; they see endless concrete roads so smooth and flawless that the driver has difficulty in keeping awake; they see cinemas which look like palaces; they see department stores with mannikins dressed like princesses. They see the glitter and paint, the baubles, the gadgets, the luxuries; they don't see the

bitterness in the heart, the scepticism, the cynicism, the emptiness, the sterility, the despair, the hopelessness which is eating up the American worker. They don't want to see this—they are full of misery themselves. They want a way out: they want the lethal comforts, conveniences, luxuries. And they follow in our footsteps—blindly, heedlessly, recklessly.

Of course not all American workers ride to work in automobiles. In Beaufort, S.C., only a few weeks ago I saw a man on a two-wheeled cart driving a bullock through the main street. He was a black man, to be sure, but from the look on his face I take it that he was far better off than the poor devil in the steel mill who drives his own car. In Tennessee I saw white men hitching their own bodies to the plough; I saw them struggling desperately to scratch a living from the thin soil on the side of a mountain. I saw the shacks they live in and wondered if it were possible to put together anything more primitive. But I can't say that I felt sorry for them. No; they are not the sort of people to inspire pity. On the contrary, one has to admire them. If they represent the 'backward' people of America then we need more backward people. In the subway in New York you can see the other type, the bookworm who revels in social and political theories and lives the life of a drudge, foolishly flattering himself that because he is not working with his hands (nor with his brain either, for that matter) he is better off than the poor white trash in the South.

Those two girls in Youngstown coming down the slippery bluff—it was like a bad dream, I tell you. But we look at these bad dreams constantly with eyes open, and when someone remarks about it we say, 'Oh, yes, that's right, that's just how it is!' and we go on about our business or we take to dope, the dope which is worse by far than opium or hashish—I mean the newspapers, the radio, the movies. Real dope gives you the freedom to dream your own dreams; the American kind forces you to swallow the perverted dreams of men whose only ambition is to hold their job regardless of what they are bidden to do.

The most terrible thing about America is that there is no escape from the treadmill which we have created. There isn't one fearless champion of truth in the publishing world, not one film company devoted to art instead of profits. We have no theatre worth the name, and what we have of theatre is practically

concentrated in one city; we have no music worth talking about except what the Negro has given us, and scarcely a handful of writers who might be called creative. We have murals decorating our public buildings which are about on a par with the æsthetic development of high school students, and sometimes below that level in conception and execution. We have art museums that are crammed with lifeless junk for the most part. We have war memorials in our public squares that must make the dead in whose name they were erected squirm in their graves. We have an architectural taste which is about as near the vanishing point as it is possible to achieve. In the ten thousand miles that I have travelled thus far I have come across two cities which have each of them a little section worth a second look—I mean Charleston and New Orleans. As for the other cities, towns and villages through which I passed, I hope never to see them again. Some of them have such marvellous names, too, which only makes the deception more cruel. Names like Chattanooga, Pensacola, Tallahassee, like Mantua, Phœbus, Bethlehem, Paoli, like Algiers, Mobile, Natchez, Savannah, like Baton Rouge, Saginaw, Poughkeepsie: names that revive glorious memories of the past or awaken dreams of the future. Visit them, I urge you. See for yourself. Try to think of Schubert or Shakespeare when you are in Phœbus, Virginia. Try to think of North Africa when you are in Algiers, Louisiana. Try to think of the life the Indians once led here when you are on a lake, a mountain or river bearing the names we borrowed from them. Try to think of the dreams of the Spaniards when you are motoring over the old Spanish Trail. Walk around in the old French quarter of New Orleans and try to reconstruct the life that once this city knew. Less than a hundred years have elapsed since this jewel of America faded out. It seems more like a thousand. Everything that was of beauty, significance or promise has been destroyed and buried in the avalanche of false progress. In the thousand years of almost incessant war Europe has not lost what we have lost in a hundred years of 'peace and progress'. No foreign enemy ruined the South. No barbaric vandals devastated the great tracts of land which are as barren and hideous as the dead surface of the moon. We can't attribute to the Indians the transformation of a peaceful, slumbering island like Manhattan into the most hideous city in the world. Nor can we blame the collapse of our



economic system on the hordes of peaceful, industrious immigrants whom we no longer want. No, the European nations may blame one another for their miseries, but we have no such excuse—we have only ourselves to blame.

Less than two hundred years ago a great social experiment was begun on this virgin continent. The Indians whom we dispossessed, decimated and reduced to the status of outcasts, just as the Aryans did with the Dravidians of India, had a reverent attitude towards this land. The forests were intact, the soil rich and fertile. They lived in communion with Nature on what we choose to call a low level of life. Though they possessed no written language they were poetic to the core and deeply religious. Our forefathers came along and, seeking refuge from their oppressors, began by poisoning the Indians with alcohol and venereal disease, by raping their women and murdering their children. The wisdom of life which the Indians possessed they scorned and denigrated. When they had finally completed their work of conquest and extermination they herded the miserable remnants of a great race into concentration camps and proceeded to break what spirit was left in them.

Not long ago I happened to pass through a tiny Indian reservation belonging to the Cherokees in the mountains of North Carolina. The contrast between this world and ours is almost unbelievable. The little Cherokee reservation is a virtual Paradise. A great peace and silence pervades the land, giving one the impression of being at last in the happy hunting grounds to which the brave Indian goes upon his death. In my journey thus far I have struck only one other community which had anything like this atmosphere, and that was in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, among the Amish people. Here a small religious group, clinging stubbornly to the ways of their ancestors in comportment, dress, beliefs and customs, have converted the land into a veritable garden of peace and plenty. It is said of them that ever since they settled here they have never known a crop failure. They live a life in direct opposition to that of the majority of the American people—and the result is strikingly apparent. Only a few miles away are the hell-holes of America where, as if to prove to the world that no alien ideas, theories or isms will ever get a foothold here, the American flag is brazenly and tauntingly flown from roofs and smokestacks. And what

sorry-looking flags they are which the arrogant, bigoted owners of these plants display! We have two American flags: always—one for the rich and one for the poor. When the rich fly it, it means that things are under control; when the poor fly it, it means danger, revolution, anarchy. In less than two hundred years the land of liberty, home of the free, refuge of the oppressed, has so altered the meaning of the Stars and Stripes that today when a man or woman succeeds in escaping from the horrors of Europe, when he finally stands before the bar under our glorious national emblem, the first question put to him is: 'How much money have you?' If you have no money but only a love of freedom, only a prayer for mercy on your lips, you are debarred, returned to the slaughter-house, shunned as a leper. This is the bitter caricature which the descendants of our liberty-loving forefathers have made of the national emblem.

Everything is caricatural here. I take a plane to see my father on his deathbed, and up there in the clouds, in a raging storm, I overhear two men behind me discussing how to put over a big deal, the big deal involving paper boxes, no less. The stewardess, who has been trained to behave like a mother, a nurse, a mistress, a cook, a drudge, never to look untidy, never to lose her Marcel wave, never to show a sign of fatigue or disappointment, or chagrin or loneliness, the stewardess puts her lily-white hand on the brow of one of the paper box salesmen and in the voice of a ministering angel says: 'Do you feel tired this evening? Have you a headache? Would you like a little aspirin?' We are up in the clouds and she is going through this performance like a trained seal. When the plane lurches suddenly she falls and reveals a tempting pair of thighs. The two salesmen are now talking about buttons, where to get them cheaply, how to sell them dearly. Another man, a weary banker, is reading the war news. There is a great strike going on somewhere—several of them, in fact. We are going to build a fleet of merchant vessels to help England—*next December!* The storm rages. The girl falls down again—she's full of black and blue marks. But she comes up smiling, dispensing coffee and chewing gum, putting her lily-white hand on someone else's forehead, inquiring if he is a little low, a little tired, perhaps. I ask her if she likes her job.

For answer she says, 'It's better than being a trained nurse.' The salesmen are going over her points; they talk about her like a commodity. They buy and sell, buy and sell. For that they have to have the best rooms in the best hotels, the fastest, smoothest planes, the thickest, warmest overcoats, the biggest, fattest purses. We need their paper boxes, their buttons, their synthetic furs, their rubber goods, their hosiery, their plastic this and that. We need the banker, his genius for taking our money and making himself rich. The insurance man, his policies, his talk of security, of dividends—we need him too. *Do we?* I don't see that we need any of these carnivora. I don't see that we need any of these cities, these hell-holes I've been in. I don't think we need a two-ocean fleet either. I was in Detroit a few nights ago. I saw the Mannerheim Line in the movies. I saw how the Russians pulverized it. I learned the lesson. *Did you?* Tell me what it is that man can build, to protect himself, which other men cannot destroy? What are we trying to defend? Only what is old, useless, dead, indefensible. Every defence is a provocation to assault. Why not surrender? Why not give—give all? It's so damned practical, so thoroughly effective and disarming. Here we are, we the people of the United States: the greatest people on earth, so we think. We have everything—everything it takes to make people happy. Or so we think. We have land, water, sky and all that goes with it. We could become the great shining example of the world; we could radiate peace, joy, power, benevolence. But there are ghosts all about, ghosts whom we can't seem to lay hands on. We are not happy, not contented, not radiant, not fearless.

We bring miracles about and we sit in the sky taking aspirin and talking paper boxes. On the other side of the ocean they sit in the sky and deal out death and destruction indiscriminately. We're not doing that yet, not yet, but we are committed to furnishing the said instruments of destruction. Sometimes, in our greed, we furnish them to the wrong side. But that's nothing—everything will come out right in the end. Eventually we will have helped to wipe out or render prostrate a good part of the human race—not savages this time, but civilized 'barbarians'. Men like ourselves, in short, except that they have different views about the universe, different ideological principles, as we say. Of course, if we don't destroy them they will destroy us. That's



logic—nobody can question it. That's political logic and that's what we live and die by. A flourishing state of affairs. Really exciting, don't you know. 'We live in such exciting times.' Aren't you happy about it? The world changing so rapidly and all that—isn't it marvellous! Think what it was a hundred years ago. Time marches on, Progress. Progress and Invention. What we dream we become. We'll get the knack of it soon. We'll learn how to annihilate the whole planet in the wink of an eye—just wait and see.

The capital of the new planet—the one, I mean, which will kill itself off—is, of course, Detroit. I realized that the moment I arrived. At first I thought I'd go and see Henry Ford, give him my congratulations. But then I thought—what's the use? He wouldn't know what I was talking about. Neither would Mr. Cameron most likely. That lovely Ford evening hour! Every time I hear it announced I think of Céline—Ferdinand, as he so affectionately calls himself. Yes, I think of Céline standing outside the factory gates (pp. 222–225, I think it is: *Journey to the End of the Night*). Will he get the job? Sure he will. He gets it. He goes through the baptism—the baptism of stultification through noise. He sings a wonderful song there for a few pages about the machine, the blessings that it showers upon mankind. Then he meets Molly. Molly is just a whore. You'll find another Molly in *Ulysses*, but Molly the whore of Detroit is much better. Molly has a soul. Molly is the milk of human kindness. Céline pays a tribute to her at the end of the chapter. It's remarkable because all the other characters are paid off in one way or another. Molly is whitewashed. Molly, believe it or not, looms up bigger and holier than Mr. Ford's huge enterprise. Yes, that's the beautiful and surprising thing about Céline's chapter on Detroit—that he makes the body of a whore triumph over the soul of the machine. You wouldn't suspect that there was such a thing as a soul if you went to Detroit. Everything is too new, too slick, too bright, too ruthless. Souls don't grow in factories. Souls are killed in factories—even the niggardly ones. Detroit can do in a week for the white man what the South couldn't do in a hundred years with the Negro. That's why I like the Ford evening hour—it's so soothing, so inspiring.

Of course Detroit isn't the worst place—not by a long shot. That's what I said about Pittsburg. That's what I'll say about

other places too. None of them is the worst. There is no worst or worstest. The worst is in process of becoming. It's inside us now, only we haven't brought it forth. Disney dreams about it—and he gets paid for it, that's the curious thing. People bring their children to look and scream with laughter. (Ten years later it happens now and then that they don't recognize the little monster who so joyfully clapped his hands and screamed with delight. It's always hard to believe that a Jack-the-Ripper could have sprung out of your own loins.) However . . . It's cold in Detroit. A gale is blowing. Happily I am not one of those without work, without food, without shelter. I am stopping at the gay Detrouer, the Mecca of the futilitarian salesmen. There is a swanky haberdashery shop in the lobby. Salesmen love silk shirts. Sometimes they buy cute little panties too—for the ministering angels in the aeroplanes. They buy any and everything—just to keep money in circulation. The men of Detroit who are left out in the cold freeze to death in woollen underwear. The temperature in winter is distinctly sub-tropical. The buildings are straight and cruel. The wind is like a double-bladed knife. If you're lucky you can go inside where it's warm and see the Mannerheim Line. A cheering spectacle. See how ideological principles can triumph in spite of sub-normal temperatures. See men in white cloaks crawling through the snow on their bellies; they have scissors in their hands, big ones, and when they reach the barbed wire they cut, cut, cut. Now and then they get shot doing it—but then they become heroes—and besides, there are always others to take their places, all armed with scissors. Very edifying, very instructive. Heartening, I should say. Outside, on the streets of Detroit, the wind is howling and people are running for shelter. But it's warm and cosy in the cinema. After the spectacle a nice warm cup of chocolate in the lobby of the hotel. Men talking buttons and chewing gum there. Not the same as in the aeroplane—different ones. Always find them where it's warm and comfortable. Always buying and selling. And of course a pocketful of cigars. Things are picking up in Detroit. Defence orders, you know. The taxi driver told me he expected to get his job back soon. In the factory, I mean. What would happen if the war stopped suddenly I can't imagine. There would be a lot of broken hearts. Maybe another crisis. People wouldn't know what to do for themselves if peace were suddenly declared.

Everybody would be laid off. The bread lines would start up. Strange, how we can manage to feed the world and not learn how to feed ourselves.

I remember when the wireless came about how everybody thought—how wonderful! Now we will be in communication with the whole world! And television—how marvellous! Now we shall be able to see what's going on in China, in Africa, in the remotest parts of the world! I used to think that perhaps one day I'd own a little apparatus and that by just turning a dial I would see Chinamen walking through the streets of Pekin or Shanghai, or see savages in the heart of Africa performing the rites of initiation. What do we actually see and hear today? What the censors permit us to see and hear, nothing more. India is just as remote as it ever was—in fact, I think it is even more so now than it was fifty years ago. In China a great war is going on—a revolution fraught with far greater significance for the human race than this little affair in Europe. Do you see anything of it in the news reels? Even the newspapers have very little to say about it. Five million Chinese can die of flood, famine or pestilence or be driven from their homes by the invader and the news (a headliner for one day usually) leaves us unruffled. In Paris I saw one news reel of the bombing of Shanghai and that was all. It was too horrible—the French couldn't stomach it. To this day we haven't been shown the real pictures of the First World War. You have to have influence to get a glimpse of those fairly recent horrors. There are the 'educational' pictures, to be sure. Have you seen them? Nice, dull, soporific, hygienic, statistical poems fully castrated and sprinkled with lysol. The sort of thing the Baptist or Methodist Church could endorse.

The news reels deal largely with diplomatic funerals, christenings of battleships, fires and explosions, aeroplane wrecks, athletic contests, beauty parades, fashions, cosmetics and political speeches. Educational pictures deal largely with machines, fabrics, commodities and crime. If there's a war on we get a glimpse of foreign scenery. We get about as much information about the other peoples of this globe, through the movies and the radio, as the Martians get about us. And this abysmal separation is reflected in the American physiognomy. In the towns and cities you find the typical American everywhere. His expression is mild, bland, pseudo-serious and definitely fatuous. He is usually



neatly dressed in a cheap ready-made suit, his shoes shined, a fountain pen and pencil in his breast pocket, a brief-case under his arm—and of course he wears glasses, the model changing with the changing styles. He looks as though he were turned out by a university with the aid of a chain-store cloak and suit house. One looks like the other, just as the automobiles, the radios and the telephones do. This is the type between twenty-five and forty. After that age we get another type—the middle-aged man who is already fitted with a set of false teeth, who puffs and pants, who insists on wearing a belt though he should be wearing a truss. He is a man who eats and drinks too much, smokes too much, sits too much, talks too much and is always on the edge of a breakdown. Often he dies of heart failure in the next few years. In a city like Cleveland this type comes to apotheosis. So do the buildings, the restaurants, the parks, the war memorials. The most typical American city I have struck thus far. Thriving, prosperous, active, clean, spacious, sanitary, vitalized by a liberal infusion of foreign blood and by the ozone from the lake, it stands out in my mind as the composite of many American cities. Possessing all the virtues, all the prerequisites for life, growth, blossoming, it remains, nevertheless, a thoroughly dead place—a deadly, dull, dead place. (In Cleveland to see *The Doctor's Dilemma* is an exciting event.) I would rather die in Richmond somehow, though God knows Richmond has little enough to offer. But in Richmond, or in any Southern city for that matter, you do see types now and then which depart from the norm. The South is full of eccentric characters; it still fosters individuality. And the most individualistic are of course from the land, from the out-of-the-way places. When you go through a sparsely settled state like South Carolina you do meet men, interesting men—jovial, cantankerous, disputative, pleasure-loving, independent thinking creatures who disagree with everything, on principle, but who make life charming and gracious. There can hardly be any greater contrast between two regions, in these United States, in my mind, than between a State like Ohio and a State like South Carolina. Nor can there be a greater contrast in these States than between two cities like Cleveland and Charleston, for example. In the latter place you actually have to pin a man to the mat before you can talk business to him. And if he happens to be a good business man, this chap from

Charleston, the chances are that he is also a fanatic about something unheard of. His face registers changes of expression, his eyes light up, his hair stands on end, his voice swells with passion, his cravat slips out of place, his suspenders are apt to come undone, he spits and curses, he coos and prances, he pirouettes now and then. And there's one thing he never dangles in front of your nose—his timepiece. He has time, oodles of time. And he accomplishes everything he chooses to accomplish in due time with the result that the air is not filled with dust and machine oil and cash-register clickings. The great time-wasters, I find, are in the North, among the busybodies. Their whole life, one might truly say, is just so much time wasted. The fat, puffy, wattle-faced man of forty-five who has turned asexual is the greatest monument to futility that America has created. He's a nympho-maniac of energy accomplishing nothing. He's a statistical bundle of fat and jangled nerves for the insurance man to convert into a frightening thesis. He sows the land with prosperous, restless, empty-headed, idle-handed widows who gang together in ghoulish sororities where politics and diabetes go **hand in hand**.

About Detroit, before I forget it—yes, it was here that Swami Vivekenanda kicked over the traces. Some of you who read this may be old enough to remember the stir he created when he spoke before the Parliament of Religions in Chicago back in the early 'nineties. The story of the pilgrimage of this man who electrified the American people reads like a legend. At first unrecognized, rejected, reduced to starvation and forced to beg in the streets, he was finally hailed as the greatest spiritual leader of our time. Offers of all kinds were showered upon him; the rich took him in and tried to make a monkey of him. In Detroit, after six weeks of it, he rebelled. All contracts were cancelled and from that time on he went alone from town to town at the invitation of such or such a society. Here are the words of Romain Rolland:

His first feeling of attraction and admiration for the formidable power of the young Republic had faded. Vivekenanda almost at once fell foul of the brutality, the inhumanity, the littleness of spirit, the narrow fanaticism, the monumental ignorance, the crushing incomprehension, so frank and sure of itself with regard to all who thought, who believed, who regarded life

differently from the paragon nation of the human race. . . . And so he had no patience. He hid nothing. He stigmatized the vices and crimes of the Western civilization with its characteristics of violence, pillage and destruction. Once when he was to speak at Boston on a beautiful religious subject particularly dear to him (Ramakrishna), he felt such repulsion at the sight of his audience, the artificial and cruel crowd of men of affairs and of the world, that he refused to yield them the key of his sanctuary, and brusquely changing the subject, he inveighed furiously against a civilization represented by such foxes and wolves. The scandal was terrific. Hundreds noisily left the hall and the Press was furious. He was especially bitter against false Christianity and religious hypocrisy: “With all your brag and boasting, where has your Christianity succeeded without the sword? Yours is a religion preached in the name of luxury. It is all hypocrisy that I have heard in this country. All this prosperity, all this from Christ! Those who call upon Christ care nothing but to amass riches! Christ would not find a stone on which to lay his head among you. . . . You are not Christians. Return to Christ!”

Rolland goes on to contrast this reaction with that inspired by England. ‘He came as an enemy and he was conquered.’ Vivekenanda himself admitted that his ideas about the English had been revolutionized. ‘No one’, he said, ‘ever landed on English soil with more hatred in his heart for a race than I did for the English. . . . There is none among you . . . who loves the English people more than I do now.’

A familiar theme—one hears it over and over again. I think of so many eminent men who visited these shores only to return to their native land saddened, disgusted and disillusioned. There is one thing America has to give, and that they are all in agreement about: MONEY. And as I write this there comes to my mind the case of an obscure individual whom I knew in Paris, a painter of Russian birth who, during the twenty years that he lived in Paris, knew scarcely a day that he was not hungry. He was quite a figure in Montparnasse—every one wondered how he managed to survive so long without money. Finally he met an American who made it possible for him to visit this country which he had always longed to see and which he hoped to make his adopted land. He stayed a year, travelling about, making portraits,



received hospitably by rich and poor. For the first time in his whole life he knew what it was to have money in his pocket, to sleep in a clean, comfortable bed, to be warm, to be well nourished—and, what is more important, to have his talents recognized. One day, after he had been back a few weeks, he ran into him at a bar. I was extremely curious to hear what he might have to say about America. I had heard of his success and I wondered why he had returned.

He began to talk about the cities he had visited, the people he had met, the houses he had put up at, the meals he had been fed, the museums he had visited, the money he had made. 'At first it was wonderful', he said. 'I thought I was in Paradise. But after six months of it I began to be bored. It was like living with children—but *vicious* children. What good does it do to have money in your pocket if you can't enjoy yourself? What good is fame if nobody understands what you're doing? You know what my life is like here. I'm a man without a country. If there's a war I'll either be put in a concentration camp or asked to fight for the French. I could have escaped that in America. I could have become a citizen and made a good living. But I'd rather take my chances here. Even if there's only a few years left those few years are worth more here than a lifetime in America. There's no real life for an artist in America—only a living death. By the way, have you got a few francs to lend me? I'm broke again. But I'm happy. I've got my old studio back again—I appreciate that lousy place now. Maybe it was good for me to go to America—if only to make me realize how wonderful is this life which I once thought unbearable.'

How many letters I received while in Paris from Americans who had returned home—all singing the same song. 'If I could only be back there again. I would give my right arm to be able to return. I didn't realize what I was giving up.' Et cetera, et cetera. I never received one letter from a repatriated American saying that he was happy to be home again. When this war is over there will be an exodus to Europe such as this country has never seen. We try to pretend now, because France has collapsed, that she was degenerate. There are artists and art critics in this country who, taking advantage of the situation, endeavour with utter shamelessness to convince the American public that we have nothing to learn from Europe, that Europe, France more

particularly, is dead. What an abominable lie! France prostrate and defeated is more alive than we have ever been. Art does not die because of a military defeat, or an economic collapse, or a political débâcle. Moribund France produced more art than young and vigorous America, than fanatical Germany or proselytising Russia.

There are evidences of a very great art in Europe as long ago as twenty-five thousand years, and in Egypt as far back as sixty thousand years. Money had nothing to do with the production of these treasures. Money will have nothing to do with the art of the future. Money will pass away. Even now we are able to realize the futility of money. Had we not become the arsenal of the world, and thus staved off the gigantic collapse of our industrial system, we might have witnessed the spectacle of the richest nation on earth starving to death in the midst of the accumulated gold of the entire world. The war is only an interruption of the inevitable disaster which impends. We have a few years ahead of us and then the whole structure will come toppling down and engulf us. Putting a few millions back to work making engines of destruction is no solution of the problem. When the destruction brought about by war is complete, another sort of destruction will set in. And it will be far more drastic, far more terrible than the destruction which we are now witnessing. The whole planet will be in the throes of revolution. And the fires will rage until the very foundations of this present world crumble. Then we shall see who has life, the life more abundant. Then we shall see whether the ability to make money and the ability to survive are one and the same. Then we shall see the meaning of true wealth.

Meanwhile I have good news—I'm going to take you to Chicago, to the Mecca Apartments on the South Side. It's a Sunday morning and my cicerone has borrowed a car to take me around. We stop at a flea market on the way. My friend explains to me that he was raised here in the ghetto; he tries to find the spot where his home used to be. It's a vacant lot now. There are acres and acres of vacant lots here on the South Side. It looks like Belgium did after the World War. Worse, if anything. Reminds me of a diseased jawbone, some of it smashed and pulverized, some of it charred and ulcerated. The flea market

is more reminiscent of Cracow than of Clignancourt, but the effect is the same. We are at the backdoor of civilization amidst the dregs and debris of the disinherited. Thousands, hundreds or thousands, maybe millions of Americans, are still poor enough to scrimmage through this offal in search of some needed object. Nothing is too dilapidated or rust-bitten or disease-laden to attract some hungry buyer. You would think the five- and ten-cent store would satisfy the humblest wants, but the five- and ten-cent store is really expensive in the long run, as one soon learns. The congestion is terrific—we have to elbow our way through the throng. It's like the banks of the Ganges except that there is no odour of sanctity about. As we push our way through the crowd my feet are arrested by a strange sight. There in the middle of the street, dressed in full regalia, is an American Indian. He's selling a snake oil. Instantly the thought of the other miserable derelicts stewing around in this filth and vermin is gone. *A World I Never Made*, wrote James Farrell. Well, there stands the real author of the book—an outcast, a freak, a hawker of snake oil. On that same spot the buffaloes once roamed; now it is covered with broken pots and pans, with worn-out watches, with dismantled chandeliers, with busted shoes which even an Igorote would spurn. Of course if you walk on a few blocks you can see the other side of the picture—the grand façade of Michigan Avenue, where it seems as if the whole world were composed of millionaires. At night you can see the great monument to chewing gum lit up by floodlights and marvel that such a monstrosity of architecture should be singled out for special attention. If you wander down the steps leading to the rear of the building and squint your eyes and sharpen your imagination a bit you can even imagine yourself back in Paris on the Rue Broca. No Bubu here, of course, but perhaps you will run into one of Al Capone's ex-comrades. It must be pleasant to be stuck up behind the glitter of the bright lights.

We dig further into the South Side, getting out now and then to stretch our legs. Interesting evolution going on here. Rows of old mansions flanked by vacant lots. A dingy hotel sticking up like a Mayan ruin in the midst of yellow fangs and chalk teeth. Once respectable dwelling-places given up now to the dark-skinned people we 'liberated'. No heat, no gas, no plumbing, no water, no nothing—sometimes not even a window-pane.



Who owns these houses? Better not inquire too deeply. What do they do with them when the darkies move out? Tear them down, of course. Federal housing projects. Model tenement houses. I'm thinking of old Genoa, one of the last ports I stopped at on my way back to America. Very old, this section. Nothing much to brag about in the way of conveniences. But what a difference between the slums of Genoa and the slums of Chicago! Even the Armenian section of Athens is preferable to this. For twenty years the Armenian refugees of Athens have lived like goats in the little quarter which they made their own. There were no old mansions to take over—not even an abandoned factory. There was just a plot of land on which they erected their homes out of whatever came to hand. Men like Henry Ford and Rockefeller contributed unwittingly to the creation of this paradise which was entirely built of remnants and discarded objects. I think of this Armenian quarter because as we were walking along my friend called my attention to a flower-pot on the window-sill of one of these gutted homes. 'You see', he said, 'even the poorest among them have their flowers.' But in Athens I saw dovecotes, solariums, verandas floating without support, rabbits sunning themselves on the roofs, goats kneeling before ikons, turkeys tied to the door-knobs. Everybody had flowers—not just flower-pots. A door might be made of Ford fenders and look inviting. A chair might be made of gasoline tins and be pleasant to sit on. There were bookshops where you could read about Buffalo Bill and Jules Verne or Hermes Trismegistus. There was a spirit here which a thousand years of misery had not squelched. Chicago's South Side, on the other hand, is like a vast, unorganized lunatic asylum. Nothing can flourish here but vice and disease. I wonder what the great Emancipator would say if he could see the glorious freedom in which the black man moves now. He made them free, yes—free as rats in a dark cellar.

Well, here we are—the Mecca Apartments! A great quadrangular cluster of buildings, once in good taste, I suppose—architecturally. After the whites moved out the coloured people took over. Before it reached its present condition it went through a sort of Indian Summer. Every other apartment was a Dive. The place glowed with prostitution. It must have been a Mecca indeed for the lonely darkie in search of work.

It's a queer building now. The locks are dismantled, the doors unhinged, the globes busted. You enter what seems like the corridor of some dismal Catholic institution, or a deaf and dumb asylum, or a Bronx sanatorium for the discreet practice of abortion. You come to a turn and you find yourself in a court surrounded by several tiers of balconies. In the centre of the court is an abandoned fountain covered with a huge wire mesh like the old-fashioned cheese covers. You can imagine what a charming spot this was in the days when the ladies of easy virtue held sway here. You can imagine the peals of laughter which once flooded the court. Now there is strained silence, except for the sound of roller skates, a dry cough, an oath in the dark. A man and woman are leaning over the balcony rail above us. They look down at us without any expression in their faces. Just looking. Dreaming? Hardly. Their bodies are too worn, their souls too stunted, to permit even of that cheapest of all luxuries. They stand there like animals in the field. The man spits. It makes a queer, dull smack as it hits the pavement. Maybe that's his way of signing the Declaration of Independence. Maybe he didn't know he spat. Maybe it was his ghost that spat. I look at the fountain again. It's been dry a long time. And maybe it's covered like a piece of old cheese so that people won't spit in it and bring it back to life. It would be a terrible thing for Chicago if this black fountain of life should suddenly erupt! My friend assures me there's no danger of that. I don't feel so sure about it. Maybe he's right. Maybe the Negro will always be our friend, no matter what we do to him. I remember a conversation with a coloured maid in the home of one of my friends. She said: 'I do think we have more love for you than you have for us.' 'You don't hate us ever?' I asked. 'Lord, no!' she answered, 'we just feel sorry for you. You has all the power and the wealth but you ain't happy.'

We got into the car, rode a few blocks and got out to visit another shell crater. The street was deserted except for some chickens grubbing for food between the slats of a crumbling piazza. More vacant lots, more gutted houses; fire escapes clinging to the walls with their iron teeth, like drunken acrobats. A Sunday atmosphere here. Everything serene and peaceful. Like Louvain or Rheims between bombardments. Then suddenly I saw it chalked up on the side of a house in letters ten feet high: 'GOOD

NEWS! GOD IS LOVE!’ When I saw these words I got down on my knees in the open sewer which had been conveniently placed there for the purpose and I offered up a short prayer, a silent one, which must have registered as far as Mound City, Illinois, where the coloured muskrats have built their igloos. It was time for a good stiff drink of cod-liver oil, but as the varnish factories were all closed we had to repair to the abattoir and quaff a bucket of blood. Never has blood tasted so wonderful! It was like taking Vitamins A, B, C, D, E in quick succession and then chewing a stick of cold dynamite. Good news! Aye, wonderful news—for Chicago. I ordered the chauffeur to take us immediately to Mundelein so that I could bless the cardinal and all the real estate operations, but we only got as far as the Bahai Temple. A workman who was shovelling sand opened the door of the temple and showed us around. He kept telling us that we all worshipped the same God, that all religions were alike in essence. In the little pamphlet which he handed us to read I learned that the Forerunner of the Faith, the Founder of the Faith, and the authorized Interpreter and Exemplar of Bahà'u'llàh's teachings all suffered persecution and martyrdom for daring to make God's love all-inclusive. It's a queer world, even in this enlightened period of civilization. The Bahai temple has been twenty years building and is not finished yet. The architect was Mr. Bourgeois, believe it or not. The interior of the temple, in its unfinished state, makes you think of a stage setting for Joan of Arc. The circular meeting place on the ground floor resembles the hollow of a shell and inspires peace and meditation as few places of worship do. The movement has already spread over most of the globe, thanks to its persecutors and detractors. There is no colour line, as in Christian churches, and one can believe as he pleases. It is for this reason that the Bahai movement is destined to outlast all the other religious organizations on this continent. The Christian Church in all its freakish ramifications and efflorescences is as dead as a door-nail; it will pass away utterly when the political and social system in which it is now embedded collapses. The new religion will be based on deeds, not beliefs. ‘Religion is not for empty bellies’, said Ramakrishna. Religion is always revolutionary, far more revolutionary than bread-and-butter philosophies. The priest is always in league with the devil, just as the political leader always leads to death.



People are trying to get together, it seems to me. Their representatives, in every walk of life, keep them apart by breeding hatred and fear. The exceptions are so rare that when they occur the impulse is to set them apart, make supermen of them or gods, anything but men and women like ourselves. And in removing them thus to the ethereal realms the revolution of love which they came to preach is nipped in the bud. But the good news is always there, just around the corner, chalked up on the wall of a deserted house: 'GOD IS LOVE!' I am sure that when the citizens of Chicago read these lines they will get up *en masse* and make a pilgrimage to that house. It is easy to find because it stands in the middle of a vacant lot on the South Side. You climb down a manhole in La Salle Street and just let yourself drift with the sewer water. You can't miss it because it's written in white chalk in letters ten feet high. All you need to do when you find it is to shake yourself like a sewer-rat and dust yourself off. God will do the rest. . . .

## NANCY MITFORD

## AUGUSTUS HARE, 1834-1903

*Memorials of a Quiet Life*, in three volumes. *The Story of Two Noble Lives*, in three volumes. *The Story of My Life*, in six volumes. *Walks in Rome. Days Near Paris. Cities of Northern Italy*. A dream of croquet parties on rectory lawns, of amiable peeresses, of cypress trees and roses and evening bells across the water meadows. Born to financial independence, into a highly cultivated society, with leisure and not without talent, who would not now change places with Augustus Hare? If a glance at his photograph reveals the face of a sulky badger there is compensation lower down; that waistcoat, that watch chain are tightly stretched over dairy produce and fine wines—oh to have been Augustus Hare. Escape, then, into this dream as it rambles on, volume after volume, but turning, as dreams do, into something liverish and unpleasant,

with sinister undercurrents and sensations so disagreeable, so like a nightmare, that it is finally an extreme relief to wake up and realize that face, figure and fortune are after all not those of Augustus Hare.

In 1834 a son was born in Rome to the Francis Hares, an attractive, feckless couple who were greatly vexed at the birth of another child, their fourth. They named him after a clergyman brother of his father's who had died in Rome only a few weeks previously and whose last (written) words had been 'Oh Lady Blessington, if you knew how much I wish I could hope I was sure of meeting you in the place to which God is taking me.' The childless widow of this brother presently wrote and asked Mrs. Francis Hare whether she could adopt the young Augustus. The reply was startling—'Yes, certainly, the baby shall be sent as soon as it is weaned, and if anybody else would like one would you kindly recollect that we have others.' At the age of fourteen months the child was duly dispatched to England, with two night shirts and a coral necklace, rather as a puppy might be sent complete with collar and chain; henceforward his own parents assumed the relationship of a singularly unaffectionate aunt and uncle, while Mrs. Augustus Hare became, in all but fact, his mother. That she loved him from the first moment there is no doubt, his love for her was exaggerated and all should have been perfect happiness. Unfortunately, however, she had chosen to settle at Lime House, near Hurstmonceux, where her brother-in-law, Julius Hare, was rector, and she fell utterly and completely under his influence. Julius Hare seems to have been well enough liked by his own contemporaries; such men as Walter Savage Landor, John Sterling, Arthur Stanley and Dr. Arnold regarded him as a particularly urbane and enlightened character.

Perhaps he was in love with Mrs. Augustus Hare (he dined at her house every evening of his life) and jealous of the child; perhaps he honestly believed that Christian cruelty ought to be practised on the young, in any case towards Augustus he was a veritable Mr. Murdstone. From the age of five years there were continual executions with a riding whip on the poor child, who when Uncle Julius arrived would be sent upstairs to 'prepare'—he knew only too well what for. Huge doses of rhubarb and senna were administered with a view to teaching him that carnal indulgences must be avoided; delicious puddings

were placed before him at dinner which he was made to carry untasted, to some poor family. Much worse, however, was in store. When Augustus was nine and had been for some months at his horrible first school he went with Mrs. Hare and Uncle Julius for a tour in the Lake District. Mrs. Hare had invited a schoolteacher called Esther Maurice to join the party, 'never foreseeing, what everyone else foresaw, that Uncle Julius, who always had a passion for governesses, would certainly propose to her. Bitter were the tears my mother shed when this result . . . actually took place. It was the most dismal of betrothals. Esther sobbed and cried, my mother sobbed and cried, Uncle Julius sobbed and cried daily.'

If Julius Hare was Mr. Murdstone his new wife was to the very life Miss Murdstone. Uncle Julius, of course, dined no more at Lime House, but Aunt Esther, who evidently had a wonderful talent for creating miserable situations, insisted that Mrs. Hare and Augustus should dine every evening at the rectory and that in winter they should stay the night, going home before breakfast in the morning.

Augustus was always left alone in a dark, unheated room until dinner time. At dinner he was discouraged to speak, if he did venture a remark it was received with withering sarcasm. His only bed was a straw palliasse and a single blanket, and in spite of the fact that the chilblains on his hands and feet were open sores he was never allowed warm water for washing, and often had to break the ice with a candlestick. On Sundays his mother gave in to a suggestion of Aunt Esther's that he should be locked into the vestry of the church between services. 'Open war was declared at length between Aunt Esther and myself. I had a favourite cat called Selma which I adored. Aunt Esther saw this and insisted that the cat must be given up to her. I wept over it in agonies of grief but Aunt Esther insisted. . . . For some time it comforted me for going to the rectory because then I possibly saw my idolized Selma. But soon there came a day when Selma was missing: Aunt Esther had ordered her to be hung!'

The mother, as Augustus calls Mrs. Hare, instead of being appalled by their cruelties, fell more and more under the influence of these devil worshippers.

Soon she conceived it her duty to withhold any manifestations of sympathy from the poor little boy. When he came home for



the holidays, longing to throw himself into her arms, she never even went to the front door to meet him, and he speaks of 'the awful chill of going into the drawing-room and seeing my longed for and pined for mother sit still in her chair by the fire.' He was sent to a series of schools where he was starved and beaten but taught nothing. His back was supposed to be weak and he went to Harrow wearing a kind of harness which saved him from things which never could be mentioned but which were of nightly occurrence all over the school', but did not strengthen his constitution. He seems to have been an unattractive boy, neither schoolmates, cousins, aunts nor uncles liked him much, and the only person to show him any kindness or human sympathy during the whole of his childhood was old Walter Savage Landor.

This odious upbringing produced a pathetic but odious personality, a prig, a snob, touchy and irritable, a toady of old ladies. He seems to have eschewed youth and to have been afraid of his own contemporaries, contact with whom he avoided through his morbid attachment to 'the mother'. With a devotion worthy of a better cause he hardly ever left her side, watching her through a series of deathbed scenes which spread over several years and which, with pages of last words, occupy a whole volume of his *Life* and a substantial part of the *Memorials of a Quiet Life*. Quiet though the rest of her life may have been her last months were, in fact, most exciting. She developed an unmanageable arm, which began by stealing her pocket handkerchiefs but soon threw itself upon her person, strangling and buffeting her and otherwise giving an excellent imitation of an all-in wrestling match. Augustus did his best to defend her, but it was uphill work, and when at last the K.O. had been delivered he found himself, at 36, quite worn out by his dual rôle of sick nurse and referee. He retired for many months to Holmwood, the country house which 'the mother' had left him, and wrote her *Memorials*.

From now on Hare was perfectly free to indulge in his two hobbies, the aristocracy and the supernatural. The emotional blank left in his life by the loss of 'the mother' was filled by Lady Waterford, and he was soon installed at Highcliffe Castle as daughter of the house. Lord Waterford, of course, would not have tolerated him for a moment but then poor Lord Waterford had been brought home on a gate some years previously.

Lady Waterford having both her arms under perfect control this relationship was less exacting than that with 'the mother'; it left him with plenty of time and energy to dine out, pay country house visits and collect his ghost stories. These stories, which are written down at length in his *Life*, fall roughly into two categories: there is the figure from the dead who appears to warn some high-born lady that her mad butler is approaching with an axe, or that the train she is sitting in will shortly be derailed (mad butlers and railway accidents seem to have been the ever present dangers of those days), and the heap of human bones in the best spare room which nightly nags at the guests until the aristocratic host is prevailed upon to give it Christian burial. In short they are both dull and improbable and soon, when reading the *Life*, one's eyes learn that paragraphs which open 'Some years ago there was a young lady living in Ireland. . . .' or 'Lord So and So often used to tell how . . .' are carefully to be skipped. Very fascinating, however, is the light thrown on the medical superstitions of the age. Mrs. Hare-Naylor wore out her optic nerve by painting too many water-colours of Hurstmonceux Castle, went blind and died in great agony. Georgiana Hare undertook to dance the clock round; she performed the feat, but it ruined her health and she was thereafter a sickly, discontented petulant woman. Priscilla Maurice, sister of Aunt Esther and authoress of *Sickness, its Trials and Blessings*, was violently sick after everything she ate for many years. Sarah Hare died very suddenly from eating ices when overheated at a ball. The case of Esmeralda Hare, the romantic, beautiful sister of Augustus, is the oddest of all. When a small child she swallowed a wooden thimble with a copper band: the thimble dissolved with time, the copper band remained in her body, growing as she grew until attenuated to the minutest thread. She was warned by the doctors that she must avoid a damp climate and eschew vegetables. In vain. She died, not very young it is true, but not in the fullness of age, and her horrible symptoms were those of verdigris poisoning. Augustus was a fervent amateur of deathbeds; he rushed to attend them upon the smallest excuse or greedily garnered up details from those that had. A great deal of dying seems to have taken place on graves; dogs and cats die on each other's and on their master's graves, and Aunt Esther died after lying for hours on Uncle Julius's grave in the pouring rain.

'I went out alone with the Duke to the kitchen garden and to the fine stables where there are still sixty horses.' So the *Life* goes on, tittle tattle, tittle tattle, volume after volume. Never a mention of politics, nothing very profound on art or literature. 'Raeburn's paintings may be slight . . . but his men never fail to be gentlemen and his women are always ladies.' When Hare's book about the Marchioness of Waterford and Countess Canning came out he remarks, 'My *Story of Two Noble Lives* appeared and was warmly welcomed by the upper classes of Society for whom it was especially written.' There can hardly have been a country house of importance which he did not visit, hardly an aristocratic family whose praises, especially exaggerated in the case of sweet-faced old dowagers, he does not sing. 'Dear Lady Ruthven is stone deaf, almost blind and her voice is like wagon wheels, but in her 86th year she is as kind and good and truly witty as ever.' More and more he identifies high rank with saintliness, noble birth with noble lives and even the phenomena of nature with the landed classes. 'The Earth has already perished once . . . and there are geological features, especially at Lord Lansdowne's place in Ireland, which prove it.' And yet the man was not a fool, his guide books show a high degree of learning, are classics in their way and, in spite of the gulf between his taste and ours, still extremely readable. In fact the *Walks in London*, packed as it is with information about so much of London that has recently been destroyed, by its own citizens and by the Germans, should prove an invaluable record to future generations. Even here, however, it is too easy to perceive his besetting weakness. The Wallace Collection, he says, 'allows the public to see in perfection art treasures which so frequently decorate the homes of the English nobility.'

At Grosvenor House, where the noble collection can only be seen by personal application to the Duke, and where the treasures are displayed in pleasant rooms constantly used by the family, he is greatly impressed by 'the haughty, expressive statue of Marie Antoinette on her way to execution, by Lord Ronald Gower'. Belgravia is 'this wearily ugly part of London, wholly devoid of interest, where none would think of visiting unless drawn thither by the claims of Society'. What had 'the mother', Aunt Esther and Uncle Julius done to turn a sad, affectionate, clever little boy into such a tremendous snob? Towards the end his



book is saturated with self pity. His intimate friends are all dead, which is only natural as they were old enough to have been his great aunts; the boys he befriended (he had a curious little home life very much centred on the befriending of boys) had all gone to the bad. There was nobody left with whom he could share his memories of departed and departing gentry, there would be nobody to tend his deathbed. Poor Augustus Hare. In spite of the peace, the leisure and the security of his era, in spite of the high vitamin content of his diet, his had not been a very happy or enviable existence. 'Base men', he says, 'avoid me.'

*M. D. PETRE*

## A RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT OF THE FIRST YEARS OF OUR CENTURY

### THREE RELIGIOUS THINKERS

AT the beginning of our century there was a very intense religious movement, not confined to one Church, not even confined to Christian Churches, but which attained its most marked character in the Roman Catholic Church. It has been defined as Modernism, but it has always seemed to me quite misleading to affix any single label to a movement so varied in character and aim, so marked by the different personal minds and hearts of its representatives. There were men termed Modernist who abandoned every form of Christian belief, there were others, as in the English Church, who formed almost a group apart from the rest of the body. But there were, again, others, uncritically included under the same denomination, whose work was, throughout, inside and not outside the Church to which they belonged; whose aim was the expansion of her message; its reinterpretation to a doubting world, and not its diminution nor its denial. These were the men who remained faithful to the Church even when she seemed to have

no use for them, for the simple reason that they continued to believe in her, and even to believe that they were serving her.

Let me say at once that there is nothing that should surprise or shock us in the fact that the Church mistrusted—even in some cases condemned—these her advocates. To the authorities it seemed like a question of life and death; as it always seems in every fresh crisis. Nor should it be maintained that our heroes were all of them faultless; that there were no excesses of word and action that justified repressive measures.

But having said this I need not say it again, and I go on to set before the reader three types of those who took part in this religious movement; all three Roman Catholics; all three members of the Church to the end; but all three very distinct in personal character and conduct. But first of all as to the chief cause and origin of the movement, and as to the motives that inspired it.

The outstanding religious problem at the beginning of our Century was not the crude, scientific materialism of the latter part of the previous century; such scientific objections as had found a classic expression in Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe*. The new problem of traditional belief was chiefly historic in character, as the science of biblical exegesis made its way into Catholic seminaries and schools. It is remarkable when we think that such a mind as that of Cardinal Newman was totally unaware of this new challenge to faith.

But if history was presenting one of the main problems with which the Christian apologist was called to deal, there was a larger question involved, a deeper and more fundamental problem.

For many, but to a few in particular, it seemed that it was a question, not of any special truth, but of the rights of human truth in general in regard to religious teaching. It seemed to such that faith must not be defended by the suppression of science, or history, or any form of sound knowledge; they believed that faith could survive all the inroads of science, and that the true danger was in exclusiveness and not in acceptance.

Towards the close of the last war I wrote a short preface to a volume of mine that had been awaiting publication, and in that preface I compared the religious movement I had been studying with its political counterpart. I found that Modernism

was not only a religious movement, but that it was also a religious movement deeply representative of the aims of the world war; that its leaders were men inspired, in religious questions, with the same ideals as those for which we were fighting in national life; that it was, in fact, a spiritual struggle for the principle of rightful liberty and self-determination. The aim of its leaders was to make the Church 'safe for democracy'—to bring the mechanism of religious life into accordance with the free spontaneous life of heart and head in the believer.

Those were years of pain and stress, of religious agony but also of intense religious life. I think religion and love have in common to provide experience of the highest joys and the most intense suffering. It is a quality of human nature that pain and joy are ever conjoined, but that the latter, at its highest, is ever worth the former, however acute. Whatever else we did in those days, we lived our utmost, and we were young enough to live to the full.

It is never an easy decision to leave the shelter of use and wont, and go forth into the comparatively unknown. It is never an easy step that takes us from our comfortable resting place under the protecting wings of authority into cold and isolation. This was what happened in the course of this movement. As we shall presently see, it was on one of the three men of whom I am to speak that the burden of misunderstanding and separation fell most heavily, but for all there was some share of it, at any rate for a time.

### VON HÜGEL

I take first the person of von Hügel—first, because he was certainly the main original factor of this movement in the Catholic Church in England. Baron Friedrich von Hügel, of diplomatic descent, had known a period of almost chaotic religious doubt, from which he had recovered through the help of one or two men, of whom he ever spoke with deep gratitude. It is not always sufficiently recognized that it is only the religiously minded that experience the torture of doubt; for the religiously indifferent it is an easy passage from belief to denial.

Von Hügel emerged from this crisis with a twofold fundamental conviction, first, that of the supreme importance of religion, as the highest directing factor of the whole of man's



life, and next, of the sacredness of truth, and the value of every form of human knowledge. His life had been, from the outset, one of strenuous intellectual labour. He produced indeed, but he studied not only in order to produce, but because truth was worth while for its own sake. Hence we find him, when wholly converted to ardent religious faith, in no wit diverted from the pursuit of any or every form of human knowledge. A religion that should despise what it slightly termed purely secular knowledge would be a religion unjust to man, and blind to God's action on human life. He recognized, passionately recognized, the claim of religion to embrace and permeate every field of human life, to be the supreme directing force of every man's heart and mind, but he also strenuously repudiated any claim of religion to be the only, even if the highest, truth. 'Every truly living unity', he writes, 'is constituted in multiplicity'; to seek to eliminate that multiplicity was to impoverish religion itself. God was, for him, not only the God of religious belief, of moral conduct, of prayer and adoration, but also the God of the whole earth, of that earth so glorious in its possibilities, so well worth all our labour to understand and know it more fully. And so also of human life, past and present, in its every phase and experience. It was worth studying, worth knowing, here on earth in its mortal career, as well as in regard to its eternal destiny.

Hence 'The vivid continuous sense that God the Spirit, upholding our poor little spirits, is the true originator and the true end of the whole movement—in all it may have of spiritual beauty, goodness and vitality.'<sup>1</sup>

And from this sense of our multiple life, multiple because we live in the midst of multiplicity; from this reverence for the earthly and human life, for earthly and human knowledge, arises his great, prevailing spiritual doctrine of what he termed 'costingness'. The true place and meaning of religion were only to be found by the continual recognition of the pressure of finite on infinite, of humanly acquired knowledge, in its immediacy, on the intangible and invisible realm of spiritual truth. Hence 'the necessity for all fruitful human life, and especially for all powerful religious life amongst men here below, of friction, tension'—hence the 'persistent danger . . . of working religion

<sup>1</sup>*The Mystical Element of Religion*, II, 393.

in such a way as to remove from its path . . . any and all of these frictions which, in reality, are essentially necessary to its own force and fruitfulness.<sup>1</sup>

Life is to be a ceaseless combat; a ceaseless effort to combine time and eternity, the claims of earth with those of heaven—not by the cheap method of casting out one or the other, but by the courageous acceptance of both, with their apparent contradiction, but their eventual unification. This was, for him, the task of every soul, but it was also the task of every Church of every living religion. And this was how and why his life as a Catholic was spent in the effort to win the recognition by the Church of truths, in so far as they were truths, that she instinctively rejected as contrary to her traditional teaching. 'Up to the end', he wrote, in a letter to myself,<sup>2</sup> 'there will be no standing still, but only the alternative between shrinkage and expansion; between the deteriorating ultimate pain of self-seeking and self-contraction, and the ennobling immediate pangs of self-conquest and self-expansion. . . . Religion everything, or but one thing among other things? . . . the point on which depends the future true and lasting peace between Faith and Science. . . . Never, as truly as creation will never be absorbed in the Creator, nor man, even the God-man, become . . . simply and purely God, will or can science and art, morals and politics be without each their own inside, their own true law of growth and existence, *other than*, in no wise a department or simple dependency of, religion.'

Von Hügel's special branch of knowledge was history—and history was not always convenient, in its findings, to the use and wont of theological teaching. He never fell under direct condemnation, but his influence was less than it might have been, and he has had more recognition from other Churches than from his own. But this in no way weakened his fidelity and attachment, for he believed that Catholicism was greater and wider than any of its passing manifestations. 'It is his very Catholicism', he writes, 'which makes him feel . . . that only if there are fragments, earlier stages and glimpses of truth and goodness extant wheresoever some little sincerity exists, can the Catholic Church even conceivably be right. For though Christianity and

<sup>1</sup> *Essays and Addresses*, XII.

<sup>2</sup> *Selected Letters*, 26 September 1900.

Catholicism be the culmination and fullest norm of all religion, yet to be such they must find something thus to crown and measure; various degrees of, or preparation for, their truth have existed long before they came, and exist still, far and wide, now that they have come.<sup>1</sup>

And so for him the worst service that could be rendered to religion was 'to evade the constant stress and friction; to deny the lesson of the Cross, for thus the Cross gets planted right into our intellectual life also; for is it not a Cross . . . to renounce day and night to any adequation between experience and analysis or synthesis . . . between the determinism of matter and the libertarianism of spirit?'<sup>2</sup>

This, then, was the faith for which von Hügel lived—a faith incorporated in the Catholic Church, but compatible with all truth, non-exclusive, comprehensive, wholly alive.

In appearance von Hügel was massive, and, in a very qualified sense, formidable looking. He had large brown eyes, a heavy brow, and the expression was grave except in humorous moments. For with all his gravity he had a very keen sense of humour, though he never allowed himself to indulge in sarcasm.

He was very fond of children, and at one time when he was staying at Richmond, Yorkshire, he asked me to lend him a little nephew every afternoon, with whom he would spend an hour of relaxation; and it was not a dull hour for the little nephew. The Baron could talk about the animals in the Zoo, even telling the small boy the relative position of their cages; he could tell him of the wonders of the sea; he could give him stories from history; and in all his learning never oppressed the young mind. He had a keen desire to forward the work of anyone who gave promise of useful achievement in the religious domain, and he was a bond of union, a channel of communication between minds all over Europe.

His fault—a truly German one—was a tendency to overbear those who were working with him; to allow them only to dare so far as he himself dared, or thought it wise to dare. As Bremond once said to me, 'He does not see that he has done more for us

<sup>1</sup> *Mystical Element of Religion*, I, IX.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters*, 90.



by helping us to walk in our own way than he can do by directing our steps'.

And this was why not all of his friendships survived their first ardour. One had to defend oneself in order to preserve one's essential independence. He was so keen on the cause that he was inclined to sacrifice the man—was that also, perhaps, German characteristic?

But no one who had come into the sphere of his friendship could forget what his influence had signified; and I used to feel that his disappearance would seem to me like the subsidence of a mountain.

And yet there was a comical side; he was so monstrous (using the word in its true, not its popular, sense) and yet so childlike. I often recall Bremond's description of their walks in Paris: 'Lui, drapé dans un manteau jaune, et absorbé dans ses pensées moi évitant pour lui les voitures et les autres écueils.' And Tyrrell's description of a walk with constant trouble over his shoe-lace, until his friend said, 'let us stop and do it up!'

He was well known in Kensington Gardens, with his little Pekingese dog and generally accompanied by a friend to whom he was pouring out his thoughts. The children of an orphanage who also frequented the Gardens, spoke of him as 'the gentleman who does all the talking!'

### GEORGE TYRRELL

George Tyrrell was, on one vital point, the direct opposite of J. H. Newman; Newman had a prevailing sense of solitary communion with God; his soul was *sola cum solo*. His early, and his later, life was free from all violent moral perturbation; he lived in the presence of his Maker. Tyrrell's was a storm-tossed soul; very early in life he knew that he had to make choice between flesh and spirit; between a life of earthly and passing or of eternal significance. I think Tyrrell might, with his brilliant gifts, have easily become a shining member of an antinomian brigade; poetical, artistic, cynical, morally indifferent. He would not have been happy, but Tyrrell was never a good hand at happiness; he would have passed, meteor-like, over the stage and left us literary or poetical gems of wit and beauty, but of no religious or spiritual significance. He might have been a great satirist like Swift. This is what I conceive as a possibility of his

life development, had there not been that other element at work within him, another force at work without him. The haunting sense of the eternal was within him; the 'Hound of Heaven' pursued him 'down the nights and down the days'.

The alternative was faced by Tyrrell, when almost a boy, and was decided for good and all, though the other possibility remained with him throughout, and coloured, we might even say illumined, his religious life and output. But such a life is essentially tragic in character; I think, indeed, that the tragic element is apparent in all three of the religious types I set before the reader, but in no one of them so much as in Tyrrell.

In his Autobiography we have a poignant account of the great religious struggle; a struggle that, like that of Augustine, was moral as well as intellectual. It was, in fact, his sense of the moral chaos that would follow from total unbelief that urged him to seek religious faith. He tells us that he had 'become an unbeliever at the age of ten'; in part owing to the influence of his brilliantly gifted brother. But this influence was removed by the early and tragic death of the latter, and once more he faced, this time independently, the great alternative. Was life, robbed of all eternal meaning, anything but an empty husk? and did not total unbelief spell human disintegration? His search for religious faith was his search to find if life was worth while.

He is pitiless in his analysis of his own efforts to attain religious faith; pitiless as he was in all self-analysis. 'Wishful thinking' is our modern expression, and never did there live one more ruthlessly suspicious of it in his own case.

'I believed', he writes, 'though now more than ever with strange revolts of my latent scepticism, especially when temptation pressed more than usual. But after a storm would come a sense of desolation and heart-sickness, and I would creep back to my darling superstitions.' With him doubt was ever the serpent's head:

'Kept quiet like the snake 'neath Michael's foot,  
Who stands calm, just because he feels it writhe.'

But we must not let Tyrrell mislead us by his own words. He was ruthless in self-analysis, and almost exulted in the exploitation of his own miseries and failures. But through it all there emerged the conviction, deeper than any doubt, that

human life had an eternal aim and meaning; and that it could only be fulfilled by moral purity and religious faith and service.

I hold that his very unbelief, which ever underlay his religious faith and striving, was significant of human faith in its essence; that mankind at large must ever feel the presence of the obvious and immediate and visible as a veil between them and the greater realities of life; so thick a veil that we mistake it for the sole reality. But what Tyrrell felt, throughout the early, as the later struggle, was that life without that faith was husk without reality. And what he felt for himself he felt for all mankind, and so the fight for his own soul was the fight for all humanity. And this is where he differed, as I said, from Newman; for in the great fight he could not, and would not, separate himself from the mass of his fellow beings.

This was one of his most marked characteristics. He had extraordinarily little value for his own person, for his present or future welfare.

'I would rather share in the palpitating life of the sinful majority than enjoy the peace of the saintly few';

'I do not think that the self-disfigurement of sin appealed to me very much, if at all.'

When considering the question of entering the Society of Jesus he says:

'I am not sure that I was quite pleased at the high tone of sanctity vindicated for that Order; for it was not personal sanctity that attracted me to it, but only its militant energy in the cause of Catholicism and faith . . . personal sanctity was a condition, as physical health is for a soldier, who enters the army, not to develop his muscles, but to fight for his country.'

At this stage of his religious process he was advised to read a classic manual of religious asceticism, but of it he says:

'It was Paley's morality throughout; virtue as a means to some happiness or bribe, distinct from virtue; be virtuous and you will go to heaven, else you will go to hell. I, alas! was not sensitive to these motives.'

He was first attracted to the Jesuit order because he had read of it as wholly apostolic in character, and he was disappointed when he found that it had many other aims and objects than the spreading of the faith to the hungry multitude.

'My sympathies were with those only who were in that sort

of darkness and need from which I believed, or hoped, the Catholic religion had delivered me.<sup>1</sup>

In my short, but very intimate, acquaintance with Tyrrell nothing impressed me more than this selflessness in his spiritual outlook. It seemed to me to verge on self inhumanity, but that was perhaps because I felt myself so far behind him in that virtue. But this characteristic was a keynote of his life and work. He had that communal sense of religion as being for all or for none; and he had no use for it as a merely personal call, still less as a personal joy.

Nor was he specially interested, as we shall see the third of those types to have been, in the spiritual *élite*; it was humanity at large, the mass of men and women, the crowd, and even the ignorant and simple crowd, that made the appeal to which his heart and soul responded.

And so his apologetic work, in its militant character, was directed, not against learning, but against a tyrannical presentment of learning; not against religious doctrine, but against a doctrine that served the mind and not the soul, and that sometimes dried up the heart in its attempt to satisfy the reason.

In a very early article he indicated what was to be his abiding attitude to religious learning in its relation to religious life and devotion. For theology, as the humble study of religious mystery, he had nothing but respect and reverence; but for theology as tyrannizing over and checking the march of human knowledge, and, still more, for theology as drying up the spontaneous movements of the devout soul, he had no reverence and no use. And this, simply, because religion had to be human in the fullest sense; of the heart as well as the mind, of the individual soul and of the soul of all humanity. Thus in regard to the mystery of the Eucharist, and the theological subtleties that have been twined around it:

‘I have more than once known all the joy and reality taken out of a life that fed on devotion to the Sacramental Presence by such a flash of theological illumination.’<sup>2</sup>

If he believed in Catholicism, it was because he regarded it as ‘a religion of the whole man; body, soul and spirit; a religion

<sup>1</sup> All passages above are quotations from *Autobiography*.

<sup>2</sup> *Through Scylla and Charybdis*; from which all these later quotations are drawn.



for every stage of his culture and not for one only. . . . A made and thought-out religion is governed by some theoretic and abstract view of man and of the hierarchic order of his faculties and exigencies. Not so one that is slowly being shaped by the play of man's conflicting requirements over a world-wide area.'

Hence he would claim as a glory of Catholicism, and not a shame, 'its various affinities with non-Christian religions'; and he claims for her also her power of adaptation to the morally and spiritually weak and miserable. In fact, for him, religion should embrace and comprehend morality and not be comprehended by it.

'Of the two the religious interpretation of morality is a greater gain for mankind than the moral interpretation of religion.'

I would invite my readers to ponder this suggestion, for I think it expresses a great truth in a few words. I have always thought that Tyrrell was partially diverted from his true call, as a moral pioneer, by his entanglement with other religious problems. For him conscience was the true source and regulating force of morality, and conscience was the voice of God and not of man. A deeper acceptance of this truth might serve us all greatly in our dealings with new and troublous moral problems.

It may be objected that Catholicism falls far short of the ideal Catholicism as he conceived it. So he himself would have said, but he was speaking of Catholicism as it could and should be, and as, in some measure, it actually was.

And such Catholicism, whether we believe that it can be fulfilled in the Catholic Church or not, is surely the type of human, and also divine, religion for which we are all sighing.

There must be room for 'the sinner as well as the saint', and 'I could not be satisfied with a religion which, however much it did for me, did nothing for the masses or for the classes'. It must have room for all, and must carry the past along with it into the future, for 'our life-task is one of unification'.

Tyrrell was condemned and his apologetic work rejected, and we need not be wholly surprised, for it is an oft-repeated story. But the labour is not lost, and the seed eventually springs up in the very soil from which it seemed to have been uprooted.

Tyrrell was plain, not to say ugly, in appearance. I have heard

that his Jesuit *confères*, when travelling with him, would say, in sporting mood, "Sit by the window, Tyrrell, and no one will want to get in." He was very fair, with sloping forehead and chin, but the eyes—a real blue—redeemed the whole countenance, and he had beautiful hands.

He was a creature of moods, sensitive and irritable; and, as von Hügel said, very lacking in the *joie de vivre*. And this quality of melancholy was associated, as so often happens, with a persistent sense of fun and humour. I often thought he had something of Swift in mind and wit, though he had too much Christian charity to be as ruthless as the latter. The foibles of those with whom he lived were a joy to him, but in a very kindly sense, and I think he rarely hurt anyone; not even when he advised one of his brethren, who was nervous about his health, and continually worried about his symptoms, to ask the doctor if he were perhaps suffering from puerperal fever! He could mock at what he revered, as some of his *dicta* proved. I have one in his handwriting on the marriage problem: 'Are two cats tied together by the tails a symbol of Christ and the Church?' And on the future life his remark: 'Heaven for comfort, hell for company!'

He had wretched health, and I think he rarely knew what it was to feel thoroughly well. But he had the greatest joy in beauty, of nature, or literature; he lived out of himself, and, indeed, cared little what became of himself. But, with all his perversity he was sensitive to affection, and valued it more than some of his friends knew. He wore a kind of protective armour, because he was afraid of caring too much; and this made it difficult for those who were equally sensitive. I always said, in regard to him and von Hügel, that the latter was a saint, but not a martyr; Tyrrell was a martyr, but not a saint.

### HENRI BREMOND

Henri Bremond was no modernist. He had, in fact, no use for historic problems in their relation to faith, because what interested him was never the problem but the soul that was facing the problem, and, above all, the soul in whom faith surmounted all problems. He wrote no work of Christian apologetic, but he searched on every side, he explored well-known and little-known sources, to find men and women whose own experience

was the true apologetic, who believed because they knew, who loved because they saw and felt. He was very much of the present age in his interest in self-revelation; from his first studies of our English religious thinkers of the Oxford movement, of Keble, Pusey, and others, and, above all of Newman, he carried on a ceaseless quest for minds and souls in which the great spiritual experience could be observed. The chief work of his life, a colossal one of eleven volumes, contained researches in religious houses resulting in the presentation of almost unknown religious types—but it dealt also, and above all, with the outstanding examples of mystical life, and with the mystical problem of pure love, and its passionate history in the great contest between Bossuet and Fénelon.

Bremond was a born director of souls, and though his work as a priest in this respect was limited to the earlier part of his life, it was in the spirit of a confessor and director that he dealt with the experiences of Newman, Pascal, Lamennais, Fénelon and the countless examples that were less known.

As I said, Newman was his earliest attraction, and I think that his prevailing theocentrism owed its first kindling to that which he found in Newman—in Newman, who said that, for him, there were only two beings that counted, himself and God. He was fascinated by what he called 'the secret of Newman'; he never claimed to have reached that great 'secret', but he tried to 'catch some traces of it'; and this was what he was doing with one or another great religious personality throughout his work as a religious writer. He was not wholly in admiration of the 'solipsism' of Newman, but it was to him a first example of that theocentrism which became to him the touchstone of mystical and religious life.

What do we mean by theocentrism? We mean that attitude of the soul for which God only has become the centre of life, and for which all the accompaniments of doctrine and sacrament become subordinate adjuncts.

I have said that Bremond was no Modernist, but neither was he an anti-Modernist. The whole question to him was that of the soul in its relation to God, in its spiritual and eternal destiny. He was impatient—and we agreed on this point—with such 'modernists' as were always hunting out what they termed superstitious devotions. Such devotions were sometimes the

food of humble souls, and Bremond was no intellectualist. The knowledge of the learned reached but a little way to the understanding of eternal truth; it was life, and life, and life that counted in the great quest.

No one could know him, above all in his early days, without recognizing his marvellous spiritual tact; his reverence for the soul and all its phases. Someone once said to me: 'He finds such interesting things in one's soul'. And so he did because he was for ever interested. He detected unreality instantly, but real experience he recognized directly he came in contact with it. He was fairly indifferent to theological intransigence, which amused rather than annoyed him, except when it crushed the life of the soul.

In fact, his cult was sanctity and saints, though he was himself no saint.

There was in him an element of the eighteenth century—a spirit of negation and mockery. I always felt that he at once believed and smiled at his own belief, but his smile was not a denial. Someone once asked me, 'Which will wear out first, his tongue or his cheek?' It was a witty and true remark, and yet the faith was there and to the end.

Let him meet with sanctity, whether that of a Francis de Sales, or that of the humble laundress, he recognized it at once, and studied it on his knees.

Sanctity—this was for him the great proof of religious truth—we may not see, but we see those who do see—we may not love, but we meet those who do love—and love, as he insisted more and more, needed neither proof nor reward.

Bremond was, I think, one of the most fascinating personalities I ever met—tender and mocking—earnest and frivolous—one who might abandon a cause, but not a friend—a believer, with a sense of the limited reach of all human knowledge and belief, but a strong believer in the human soul and its eternal significance. He knew God through the souls of those who knew Him.

It would take more of a physiognomist than I am to describe Bremond's appearance—wide forehead, deep-set grey eyes, thin lips—a something strong and remote and slightly ironical in expression. I always thought it in some ways a pity that he had denied himself family life—and I expect he agreed with me—though I used to say, laughing, that matrimony itself would have



been too restricted for him; that he would have wanted more, and more would have wanted him! But this was a perverse judgment, for he was capable of very faithful affection; he loved his sister's children, and he loved his own brothers. He had certain qualities of the eighteenth century, and could have held his own with Voltaire and Co. And yet no one was quicker to discriminate and to distinguish the real from the fictitious. He recognized at once, however unimportant the personality, what was genuine and what was not, and he was as quickly conscious of pretence as he was almost outspoken in his dislike of it. I have known him really merciless with people who sailed under false colours, however harmless those colours might be.

As a companion he was wholly delightful; drawing the best out of everyone; never missing a shade of one's thought or meaning; selfish but sympathetic; deeply interested in every phase of human thought and feeling.

And thus I conclude my study of these three religious types; who all played their part in that movement which has been termed Modernism. Von Hügel, who loved a Cause; Tyrrell, who loved humanity in its mingled misery and goodness; Bremond, who loved the saint, the thinker, the apostle, the director. The German who had, indeed, his sense of humour, but could never joke in questions that he deemed serious; the Irishman, who joked just because it was serious; the Frenchman, for whom nothing was wholly serious.

But for all three it was the eternal that signified, and life was only worth while when centred in eternity.

ROBERT MELVILLE

# THE EVOLUTION OF THE DOUBLE HEAD IN THE ART OF PICASSO

THE scarification stripes painted on the cheeks of African masks were taken up by Picasso in his negro period and rationalized to represent a dark shadow on one side of the face. In 'Les Femelles d'Avignon' the rationalization breaks down: the faces of the two figures on the right bear the shadow markings, but there is no correspondingly heavy shading on the bodies, so evidently the shadow on the faces is not really an effect of light, but is there for the sake of the device by which it is represented.

Picasso's use of the scarification stripes is strictly confined to the negro period, but they are related to subsequent pictorial devices in two ways. Considered as applied decoration, they constitute precedent for the tattooing of objects in cubist still life paintings with dots of colour borrowed from Seurat's *pointillisme*, and for the whorled Maori-like facial markings on several studies of women drawn in 1938: considered as a device for a dark shadow they are implicated in the origins of the double head.

Several studies of heads belonging to the period of the classical giantesses are distinguished by heavy shading on one cheek. But the reticent use of the modelling shadow in other works of the period makes it clear that heavy shading has no fundamental connection with the plastic effects to which he was giving so much attention. The darkened cheek is not attributable to an interest in dramatic lighting; on the contrary, it succeeds in conveying the impression of being independent of an exterior source of light, and its emphasis beyond the requirements of three-dimensional illusion gives to the shadow an emblematic stamp.

A drastic transformation of this shadow took place two or three years later in a painting of a woman's head, dated 1924-5, in the Willoughby Collection. The face is divided down the middle into two flat contrasted colours which achieve an extreme and beautiful formalization of light and shade.

The conception of the face as a shape halved by two colours led to some remarkable studies in asymmetrical composition. The example best known to me is in the Willoughby Collection. It contains a rudimentary profile which makes it an incipient double head, but it is for another reason that it claims attention. Each half of the face is given an eye, half a mouth, a nostril and a rouge spot, and the features in one half are deliberately opposed in shape, size and disposition to those in the other half. One eye is long, narrow and tipped on end; the other is round and resembles a double daisy: one half-mouth is open and shows the teeth; the other is represented by two strokes which give a tight-lipped effect: nostrils and rouge spots play a Miro-like game in their enchanting call and answer across the division. But the total image is a portrait of a woman exquisitely unguarded, and the brilliantly coloured devices are haunted by a psychic distress. Perhaps only Picasso could take abstraction so far without sacrificing the human presence.

The correspondence he establishes between split face and divided personality calls to mind the strange Portuguese painting of the Holy Trinity which Nicolas Calas reproduced in *XX Siècle* a few years ago,—a picture which represents the three aspects of God as three dolorous heads joined together under a single crown of thorns. Possibly the notion of godhead as the humiliated Christ in triplicate is theologically sound, but its projection as a sick monster seems pathological, for it is quite evident that the painter did not have a satirical intention. I am inclined to think that its significance is autobiographical, and that it represents an unconscious deification of the dislocated personality. The Picasso makes no irrational appeal for reverence, is without any trace of morbid self-revelation, and, visually, is estranged from the merely plausible, but it is at once a gaily coloured monster and an image of the soul's maladies.

The exploration of the notion of division produced an oblique reinstatement of Picasso's interest in the barbaric ornamentation of the face, for the devices with which he has represented the disparate shapes and sizes of eyes, nose and mouth absorb the rôle of the applied decoration. The features themselves have become a barbaric ornamentation of the face. They are early examples of the superb emblazonry of human features which characterizes the work of 1937-8.

The notion of division was implicit in the 1924-5 painting which brought the shadow *qua* shadow to a conclusive formalization, but this work was also the progenitor of the first picture in which the depiction of the double head is the predominant motive; a profile arises out of the shadow and leads directly to the most radical expression of Picasso's formal and psychological interest in the darkened cheek.

The double head in the art of Picasso is a frontal view which incorporates a profile, sometimes two profiles, and I suppose a precedent is to be found in analytical cubism, where the plan and elevation of an object were often brought together in a single device. The split face and the double head are complementary images; the one divides the indivisible and the other unifies the un-unifiable, and the majority of the works in which these images appear disclose a Rimbaudian compound of inspiration and systematic derangement.

The tentative studies for the double head<sup>1</sup> occur in the treatment of plaster casts included in some large and elaborate still life compositions of 1925, and perhaps the most interesting example is in 'The Studio', painted in the summer of that year. A three-quarter view of a plaster head standing amidst a display of studio *bric-à-brac* shows us not only a profile of a bearded 'philosopher' with an alert and cheerful countenance, but allows us a glimpse of a beardless and expressionless face, depicted in shadow. The glimpse of a different being lurking behind the intelligent profile is unassuming, but as soon as the double life of the head is noticed the painting becomes ambiguous: the two detached plaster arms which are among the objects depicted seem not so certainly to have come from the plaster cast room, but convey a suggestion of iconoclasm; the open book, the apple, the spray of leaves might be magical accessories: an undercurrent of destructive ecstasy and a hint of sorcery unsettle the majestic orderliness of the composition.

I have already mentioned that the 1926 painting which brings a profile out of the shadow side of the 1924-5 head is the first

<sup>1</sup> A face containing the silhouette of a profile appears as early as 1918, in a poster-like cubist painting of an Italian girl, but it is a purely decorative effect, used equally well by Gris.



work in which the coming together of a profile and a frontal view is the primary subject-matter of a picture, but I must add that I have no evidence that this painting preceded the large and important drawings of the double head made in the same year except the fact that its forms are clearly dependent upon the earlier picture.

The drawings take us into the deep waters of the theme and insist on the relationship between shadow and profile.

The large, complex drawing of a head with two profiles in the Willoughby Collection does not show the fusion of the separate aspects into a single precise form, but it allows us to see the creative process groping towards multiple ends: not only is there the solution of an immediate problem in sight, but forms occur which defy repetition, while others raise the tentative framework for a masterpiece completed in the following year.

This drawing is my real justification for mentioning analytical cubism in connection with the double head, for although the analytical phase is cubism in its most intellectual, least effective aspect, its negation of the substance of an object has given it the forms a quality of transparency which the present work revives. One profile is neatly contained within the outline of the frontal view, but the profile in shadow is part of a separate, transparent head whose facial area overlaps the cheek of the head depicted frontally: within the broad oval of the full face appears the sleeping concave profile of a negress. The dark lower half of this apparition reaches up with parted lips to close over the other mouth with the lightness of a shadow and with a falling away at the moment of contact which catches an extraordinary shiver of voluptuousness.

Nowhere else does Picasso seem to have allowed so many of the mental suggestions inherent in the double head, and in the forms from which it evolved, to show themselves. The most expressive profile is on the shadow side; in contradistinction to the other profile and the frontal view, it is depicted in sleep and represents a woman of a primitive race; and the invasion is conceived as a love passage. Perhaps it is not without significance that Picasso himself has said that this is a drawing of one woman, not of two, for it is a remark which must have been prompted by the fact that the disparity between the two faces leaves room for misunderstanding. So, all things considered, I do not think we

shall be guilty of pressing interpretation too far, or of putting too great a burden upon the significance of 'significant form' if we refer to this particular profile as a personification of the unconscious, and associate its rôle as lover with an augmentation of the personality.

The revelatory note struck by this drawing seems to be involved in Picasso's partial failure to integrate the forms, and in so far as it departs from inscrutability it is separated from the main stream of his forms, which do not confide in us but exercise a kind of fetishistic authority. Nevertheless, the complex life depicted within the bounding line of the frontal head gives it a unique place in the art of Picasso. Reminiscences of the kiss are quite frequent in later work but never succeed in reproducing its emotional force, for it has the spontaneity and mystery of a perfect improvisation.

The drawing in the Chrysler Collection is probably the loveliest of all his studies of the double head. It is a wonderful synthesis of visual knowledge, and gives a new, strange, satisfying shape to the human head which rivals the most sensuous and exquisite departures from the given shape of the *compotier de fruits*. Only one profile is retained, but it gives life and form to the shadow and is immediately and very movingly recognizable as another aspect of the face it has invaded.<sup>1</sup>

By comparison with the Willoughby drawing, which is 'open' and teeming with formal suggestions, the Chrysler drawing is hermetic. It has the look of being deliberately abstracted from the other, and in achieving finality withdraws into inscrutability. The Willoughby drawing is a flux of pictorial notions and for that reason offers more scope for discussion. It contains much evidence of improvisation. The great 'U' curve on the right-hand side, for instance, may well be an impulsive enlargement of the curious curve which represents the nose in both the 1926 painting and the Chrysler drawing (as such it calls to mind the transference of the unpupilled oval eye-form, used in the portraits of the negro period to some contemporaneous still life compositions in which it represents the over-emphasized ellipses of pots). This magnified curve certainly does not serve any fundamental purpose in the drawing, but at the end of 1926 Picasso began to paint a 'Seated

<sup>1</sup> Another very good example of the series can be seen at the Zwemmer Gallery.

Woman', now in the New York Museum of Modern Art, in which a sealed 'U' curve is treated as a theme with variations and is the chief unifying element in the composition.

This 'Seated Woman', completed in 1927, and unquestionably one of his greatest works, is a three-quarter length study of a woman with a book on her lap, in which the interpenetration and overlapping of forms extends into the figure. The effect is of two side views intermingling to create a frontal view, and although one feels that complexity has reached its limit the painting has a breath-taking lucidity. Its formal beauty, so evident and compelling, is inseparable from a peculiarly intimate activity. The profiles seem to be groping with graceful and conciliatory gestures towards complete identification. Already they are marvellously entangled, but the quiet insistent movement of interpenetration and mutual assimilation does not cease; it is as if an immortal were subject to an interminable organic process. No doubt an aspect of this activity is illustrated in that brilliant auto-cannibalistic image of Dali's (the most elegant of his many studies of onanism) which, for the sake of a charming play on words, he called 'Autumnal Cannibalism'. But Picasso's work never illustrates a preconceived easily definable meaning, and the configuration of the 'Seated Woman' does not exclude, for instance, the subliminal presence of the *Amants dans la Rue*—a man and a woman of the lower classes clasped together so tightly that they make a single form—which he painted in the first year of the century.<sup>1</sup>

I believe that a systematic study of his images would show that his formal enterprises invariably arrive at a point of stabilization in a painting of a seated woman; the example under discussion is a kind of formal disclosure of the assimilative nature of the seated woman image, and, appropriately, brings the first phase of the double head to a close.

Apart from the example in another, slightly later, version of the 'Seated Woman', in the James Thrall Soby Collection, I do not know of any further studies of the double head before 1932. The intervening years are devoted to studies of the head and figure whose departures from human appearance are too extreme to have need of the particular integrative factor which distinguishes the majority of the double heads.

<sup>1</sup>His pastel of this subject is well known through its reproduction as a coloured postcard.

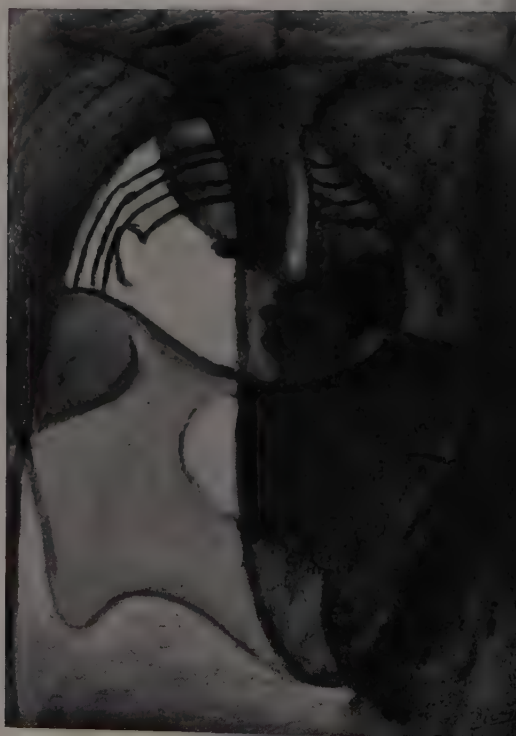


Woman in an armchair. 1932. Oil Painting. PICASSO  
(A. Zwemmer Collection)





Head, 1926. Pastel

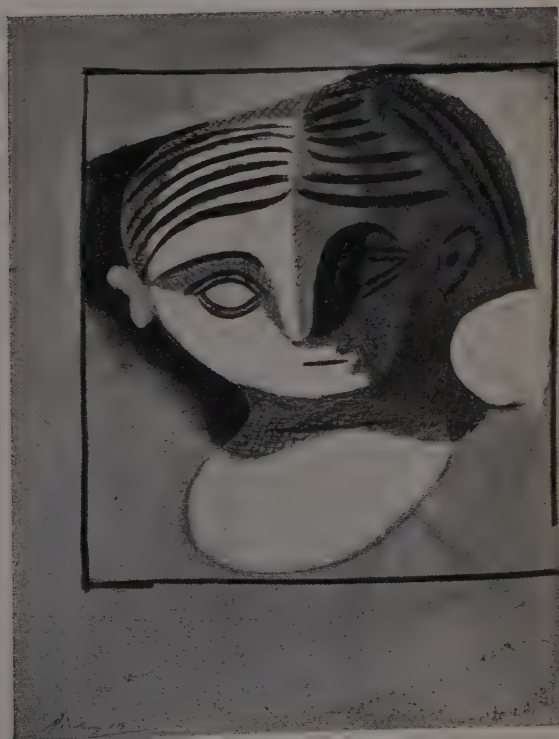


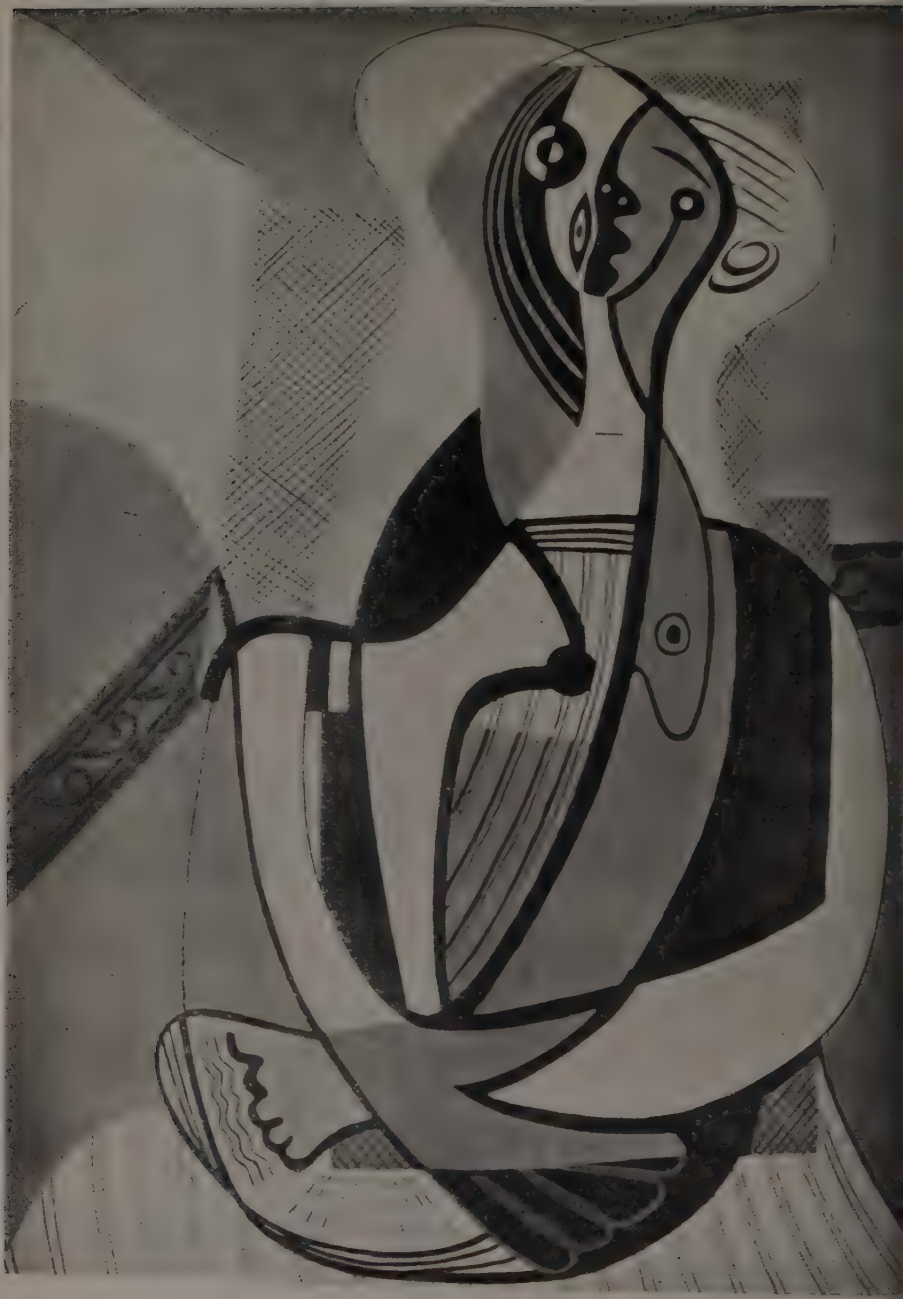
Head, 1926. Pastel  
(Hugh Willoughby Collection)



Head, 1924-25. Oil Painting  
(Hugh Willoughby Collection)

Head, 1926.  
coal and White Chalk  
(Chrysler Collection)





Seated Woman. 1927. Oil Painting

In 1930, Georges Braque, who was so closely associated with Picasso, in the cubist period, became interested in the double head. But this painter has never shown much sensitiveness to the human model, and he gingered up a flat, characterless face by over-painting some of the features at a slightly different angle, on a lighter coloured area of paint which recalled the gummed cut-out of collage-cubism. Picasso probably took a hint from Braque's method, for a 1932 painting in the Lee Ault Collection shows a development of the notion of one painted shape partly hiding another. The picture depicts a woman pressing one hand to her face (a favourite theme of Picasso's) and holding up a white shift under her breasts with the other. The one hand and the profile are co-ordinated in a manner which allows a finger-nail to serve as the mouth, and the other hand forms a *compotier* for the breasts. This is one of the very few studies of the double head in which the profile is not integrated with the frontal view. The profile faces outwards and is outlined on a flat even shape of colour which gives the illusion of having been placed over a three-quarter view of the head, leaving only a small part exposed. The profile is concentrated upon sustaining its pose and the eye looks towards the side of the picture, but the uncovered eye of the three-quarter view returns our gaze with a watchful stare. Probably an attempt has been made to express movement without recourse to the means so far at the disposal of painting, but the result is an emblem of a state of mind rather than an interpretation of movement,—a visual equivalent of the state of divided attention.

The typical double head of 1932 has a moon-like roundness in keeping with the bold curvilinear treatment of the many nudes painted in that year. Several examples are harsh and ugly, but one which is an experiment in swollen effects and has an intolerably bloated appearance, crudely prefigures the beautiful, powerfully three-dimensional plaster head in a 1933 picture owned by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Pulitzer, Jnr. But the plaster head is not a fusion of profile and front view; the double head is not to be found in Picasso's work after 1932.

The large and magnificent 'Girl Before a Mirror', in the New York Museum of Modern Art, brings the double head to a final simplification, although the total design of the painting is extremely intricate. The frontal view is the orb typical of the 1932 studies; the inner line of a single leaf of hair dinges the circle,



but the outer line describes a broad simple curve to rejoin the circle and send the eye on another journey round the face. The profile is now in the light, and the rounded cheek which completes the frontal view is in shadow—a treatment which recalls the plaster head in 'The Studio'. The likeness between profile and full face so wonderfully realized in the 1926 Chrysler drawing is repeated here in another type of face, and the profile reflected in the mirror enriches this dialectic of resemblance by establishing a likeness to the frontal view and opposing the other profile with a different cast of features.

Perhaps the only other picture painted in 1932 which rivals the 'Girl Before a Mirror' is the audaciously improvised study of a nude in a red armchair which has recently come into the possession of Mr. Zwemmer.

In the art of Picasso, improvisation has become a highly-organized process which reduces preconception to a minimum and gives the intelligence the task of co-ordinating instinctive interferences instead of repressing them, and in the Zwemmer picture there is a seemingly arbitrary interference peculiar to the improvisatory process which allows a fragment of the chair to invade the nude, and is recognizably a consequence of the same kind of impulse which projects the profile into the frontal view of the head. The woman's shoulder has been eliminated so that a piece of the red leather chair-back can be seen, and her arm, completely detached from the body, has to find a support on the arm of the chair. But the mutilation is mitigated by her graceful acceptance of the situation, for the manner in which she fondles her beads causes them to follow the contour of the non-existent shoulder, and gives to the piece of chair-back something of the appearance of an exotic epaulette. The chair is in the corner of a room with grey walls which are, of course, simply a division into two parts of the area of the canvas left over after the nude and chair have been depicted; but the arbitrary shape of the fragment of chair-back, with one sharp corner and an otherwise irregular outline, breaks into the rounded forms of the nude to emboss the foreground with a sample of the accidental shapes of the background—more than a sample, in fact, for in its intensity of red it is a concentrated equivalent of the area of the grey walls, and in representing their essence imparts to them the dignity of created form. It is a kind of passionate *billet-doux* from the background to

the figure, and is no less moving than that view through the window in 'The Child's Brain' of Chirico's naive offering of a red chimney to the longed-for palace.

The subsidiary profile in the double head of this nude is a result of the same improvisatory process, for its yielding concavity, so sympathetic to the soft rotundities of the body, is obviously evolved out of the shape which remained after the other profile had been depicted. Its passivity is sharply opposed by the cool arrogance of the dominant profile, and their interaction in a frontal view gives the face an inexhaustible life and changeability.

This is the most boldly naked image of a seated woman Picasso has ever painted, but there is an equivocation between sensuality and remoteness in the warm curves and cool blues and mauves of the flesh, and there are many shapes which suggest phases of the moon, so that the relinquishment of all covering seems to have been the signal for her transformation into a moon-goddess.

In the image of a seated woman we bid farewell to the double head. The dominant pale blue profile, chafed to mauve in the cheek by the strongest wind of poetry which has arisen in this century, is, in its arrogance, prophetic of the profile's victory over the frontal view. Two years later, a lovely picture of a girl reading by lamplight opened the period of the augmented profile.

## FRED URQUHART

(Author of *Time Will Knit*, and *I Fell For a Sailor*)

# GRANDMA WAS A LAND GIRL

THE little old man came into the dairy when Jackie was getting the cans ready for the milking one Sunday afternoon. He had a sun-brown face and he wore a shapeless paddy hat and a pair of drunken flannel trousers that had been washed almost white. 'Ay, ay,' he said.

'Ay, ay,' Jackie said.

The little man looked about with curiosity. 'What a change

there's been sin' I was here last. I hinna been at Dallow for twenty-five year.'

'Is that a fact?' Jockie said, shifting the cans beneath the milk cooler and placing the rubber tubes into them. 'Ye'll see a big difference. This new dairy and all the new byres.'

'Ay.' The little man stood with his hands in the pockets of his short trousers, rocking backwards and forwards. He gaped at the huge ten-gallon cans, at the white walls, at the zinc sinks, at the milk cooler, and finally at the sterilizing chest. 'What's that thing for?'

'That's the sterilizing chest,' Jockie said. 'Ye didna think it was a safe, did ye? We'd need an awfa lot o' money to fill that! We put the cans and things in there to be sterilized. We just turn on the steam and it does everything. See, that's the boiler house in there.'

'Oh, Jesus!' the wee man said, shaking his head in bewilderment. 'A sterilizing chest!'

He followed Jockie into the milking parlour. It was long and light, gleaming with cleanliness. The first batch of eighteen cows were already in their stalls beside the units, placidly munching dairy cake, waiting for the milking machine to be switched on. The little man stared at the machine, at the glass bowls for the milk, at the pipes running through to the dairy. 'Oh, Jesus!' he said, softly. 'What next!'

He watched the land girls go from cow to cow, wash their udders with the sponges attached to each unit, and then strip them into the strip-cups. 'What are they doin'?' he asked.

'Strippin' them to see that they hinna got mastitis or anythin' like that,' Jockie said. 'The udder must aye be washed afore they get milked. I dinna suppose they'd be as hygienic as that in the auld byres when you were here last.'

'Oh, Jesus!' the wee man said. 'Oh, Jesus!'

He walked slowly along the milking parlour, eyeing the land girls in their white overalls. Big Greta, looming up from behind a cow she had been stripping, winked at him. 'Hello, Big Boy!'

He stared at her. Greta grinned at Mary and pretended to go all coy. 'My fatal fascination!' she said, touching her hair with exaggerated femininity. She turned and pulled the handle of the hopper, sending the dairy cake rattling down into the trough. 'Come on, sweetheart, get your cake!' She slapped the cow on the haunch.

'What's that?' The little man nodded at the hopper.

'That's a hopper,' Greta said. 'The cake comes down through hole in the loft. This handle releases it into the troughs.'

'Oh, Jesus!' the little man said.

'Ye'll ha'e to see the byres now,' Jockie said, winking at the girls. 'Come on and I'll show ye. The most up-to-date byres in his part o' Scotland.'

The little man stood open-mouthed in the centre of the first byre. 'It'll be nae bother to muck oot a place like this,' he said.

'Nae bother ava!' Jockie laughed.

'Oh, Jesus!' The little man shook his head solemnly. 'Fancy puttin' cows in a braw place like this! It's guid enough for fowk to bide in. Fancy lettin' cows in here to skitter about a' ower the place! Their names up on boards, too, and a bowl for each ane to drink oot o' . . . and such comfortable-like stalls! What are cows comin' til! Oh, Jesus!'

They went back into the parlour. The milking had started. The little man stood with his back to the wall and watched. There was a steady stream of cows entering and leaving the parlour; they came in at one door, went into the first vacant stall, stood while their udders were washed and the teat-cups attached, munches the cake while being milked and walked out when the gate of the stall was opened. Every cow was milked in four minutes. Just now, Jockie said to the little man, they were milking one hundred and fifteen in about an hour.

The usual Sunday afternoon spectators were beginning to gather; they ranged along the wall of the milking parlour, nodding at the machine and discussing it with each other. The wee man talked to those nearest him. He kept shaking his head, contrasting this method with the methods that had been used when he was last at Dallow. Greta and Mary, who were working the units nearest to where he was standing, heard him say 'Oh, Jesus!' every now and then.

A young man started to chaff him. Greta heard him say: 'But ye're nae regrettin' the passin' o' the auld byres, are ye? Ye're nae wantin' to go back to the days o' "the Muckin' o' Geordie's Byre"?'

'Ah, there was a song for ye, now,' the wee man said sadly. 'It was a' in there. The verra words show it.' And he began to sing in a mournful voice:



'A hunder years ha'e passed and mair,  
Where Sprottie's was the hill is bare,  
The croft's awa', so ye'll see nae mair  
The muckin' o' Geordie's byre.'

The young man nudged his neighbour and winked. The guffawed ribaldly. But the wee man, his eyes raised to the ceiling, looking at something far beyond the gleaming pipes of the milking parlour, went on singing softly:

'His fowk's a' dead and awa' lang syne,  
So in case his memory we should tine,  
Just whistle this tune to keep ye in min'  
O' the muckin' o' Geordie's byre.'

He stood for a few minutes, shaking his head sadly. Then as if coming out of a daze, he looked at the efficient white-clad land girls, at the gleaming pipes, the sponges and the long red tubes. 'A factory!' he muttered. 'It's just like a factory! Oh, Jesus!' And he turned and went out, mumbling to himself.

Greta gawked at Mary. Then she sagged at the knees. 'Oh, Jee-SUS!'

Mary sighed sympathetically. 'It's not really funny, Greta. Poor old man. Maybe we'd feel like him if we came back after twenty-five years and saw all the changes.'

But Greta could not resist the temptation for some buffoonery. She leaned her elbow on a cow's haunch. 'If I do come back I'll bring my grandchildren with me. They'll be pushing my bath-chair. "Now, children, this is the farm where Grandma was a land girl. Yes, children, don't laugh. Grandma was a land girl once. Williamina!"' She gave the cow a poke. "Stop picking your nose and pay attention to what Grandma is saying. Now, we'll go into the milking parlour. Good gracious, what's this? My my, how things have changed since Grandma was a girl! What have we here?"—I'll peer through my lorgnette—"What's this? Do you mean to tell me, young man, that you don't have any cows? You've never even heard of cows? But we had cows here when I was a girl. Well do I remember them! Especially number a hundred and nine, who kicked like fun! Yes, children, Grandma still has the mark on her . . . well, anyway, she still has the mark! I'll maybe show you when you're older, Williamina, if

"You'll learn to stop picking your nose! Young man, do you mean to stand there and tell me brazenly that you have *no* cows?"

Greta glared fiercely at Jockie, who held his sides, helpless with laughter. "Do you mean that you have no byres to muck? That you don't even have land girls? Good gracious, what's the world coming to?" She shook her head indignantly, a fierce old lady to the life. "But *where* do you get the milk?"

"We just make it with a puckle powder and water." Jockie only managed to say this coherently before dissolving again into hysterical laughter.

"Oh, I see! It all comes out of tubes!"

Greta swooned against the cow, holding up her imaginary orgnette. "Oh, Jesus! And it's carried along from the tubes to the consumer by aeroplane! My my, how times have changed since Grandma was a land girl! Oh, Jee . . . sus!"

## ARCHIMEDES

# THE FREEDOM OF NECESSITY—IV

(Conclusion)

IN the new stage of humanity to which we are tending the consciousness of history in its widest sense will be a most important moving force. We need this consciousness now more than ever to take our bearings in the present chaos. History is not merely a record of what has happened or even an indication of the direction in which human society has moved: it has begun to tell us why it has moved in that direction and how its present movement is related to our own activity. Philosophy and history have now begun to regain the function that they served when they were first distinguished in classical times. They are as much a motive for action as a guide to how that action should be carried out. Through our greater knowledge and deeper understanding we can now see our place in the universe far more clearly than it was ever possible for men to see it before; but in discovering it we also find that that place is not something settled for us once and for

all, to make the best of, but is something we have contributed to making and we will contribute to changing. In this realization lies also an understanding of the general motives of our own actions. This understanding is no longer passive; it is because we can see why we have done things, and are doing things, in relation to the social movements around us, that we begin to see and to feel why we should do things. This new philosophical and historical outlook will serve to integrate human society as effectively as, but more intelligently and flexibly, than did the religions of past ages. In the first stage of society it was sufficient for each group of tribes to have their own local and personal gods, who were, in a quite literal sense, the fathers of the tribesmen. The growth of territorial empires, with their attendant big cities and slave countryside, fitted and, indeed, gave rise to, great world religions. These religions were now for all men instead of for restricted groups, but they were also religions for all time, fixed as they were to the conditions of agricultural society. In the third stage of humanity we need no religion in either of these senses. Man no longer needs to compose anonymously and collectively a canonical account of the world he lives in and of his duties in it. Instead we have a continual search for conscious understanding on one side and planned co-operative activity on the other. The new society, the progressive understanding of it and the progressive moulding of it, run together as aspects of the same process.

#### SOCIETY AND HUMAN NATURE

The new society is not merely a new regrouping of the men of the old society: it is a society of new people. The outlook, the character, the values, the habits and moralities of men are, in spite of their manifest personal differences, the product of the society that they live in. Just as the hunting and agricultural stages of human development have left their mark on human character, so will the equally great changes towards the conscious and scientific society affect the spirit and purpose of men. That change is already under way. As Lysenko has said, 'Men are not born in the Soviet Union, organisms may be born but men are made.' We must learn to understand how much of what we think of as fundamental human nature is the product of our own upbringing and our introduction into a mercantile society.

The things that people seek for in their lives, the eternal values

of the philosophers, do not become any the less real because we have found that they are relative and determined by social forms. This relativity is itself an absolute thing—the only ‘absolute’ there is. We live and work and feel and enjoy in society and through society. The values that correspond to our relations with the new society will be just as important and deeply felt when they are consciously understood as they were when they were mystically accepted. No band of irrational fanatics could show more devotion than the people of Stalingrad, who know that they are fighting an historic battle to establish a rational, full and hopeful life for all men.

The classical values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness, depend for their meaning entirely on the existence of society and change their character with the change of that society. The word ‘Truth’ stood originally for traditional loyalty. It still stands for the kind of judgments that will receive the assent of humanity at large because they are found to work: that is, they can be relied on not to lead people to expect things that do not happen. A great deal of truth is pure convention, but its value lies in that, as long as the convention is accepted, it does not lead to confusion. This does not mean that anything that can achieve social assent is true: the door is not open to the perversion of pragmatism. Nazi truth is of this character; it worked supremely well until recently for the Nazis themselves: the others have had to take it. Nevertheless it is not socially determined truth because it is forever running into the contradictions which are brought about by its rejection of common humanity in exalting a particular gang. These contradictions express themselves, both inside and outside Nazi Europe, in revolt and armed resistance. The truths that are not social—so-called scientific truths—have an appearance of a far more absolute character; their verification lies in experiment; but they are also relative in a different way. No scientific truth is static: it is continually acquiring wider and deeper meanings which always change it and may sometimes appear to contradict it, as quantum mechanics did classical mechanics. In fact the new truths contain the old truths, representing a further stage of social conquest of the outer environment. But they contain them and more. The fact that we have seen this process happening does not lead to scepticism but to a concept of truth much more alive and active than the eternal verity of the ancients.



Beauty has always been a more admittedly social attribute than truth. We know how style and fashion continually distort established values; but again this variability does not diminish the reality of beauty. It is inherent in the common social enjoyment of things either directly pleasing our senses, such as food or flowers, or indirectly referring us to some moving or amusing social occurrence. The beauty of socially created forms, the beauty of art against the beauty of nature, depends just as much on the people who are affected as on the artist who creates. We suffer today from a dislocation of appreciation of art forms. There is no common humanity to appeal to. Instead we have the distinct popular and highbrow arts which correspond to the differences in social education. Every work of art is expressed in a language of its own that has grown up through a long tradition and can only be appreciated by those who have some hold of that language. Only in a society where all are brought up alike and share in a common heritage can we hope to develop a fully integrated art.

Goodness is purely social: there is no such thing as natural goodness. Society itself depends for its first origin and existence on goodness, for unless the most primitive men were prepared to give and take, there would have been no society and no humanity. And yet the standards of goodness or our feelings of goodness seem, if anything, more absolute to us than those of truth or beauty, and they are so because they were founded deeply in the framework of society. When society changes, goodness must change too; but the old good things—fellowship and kindness—remain as part of the new goodness though new demands in behaviour and feeling may be added to them.

#### NEW MORALS AND NEW VALUES

Religion and morality are the mythological and unconscious expression of the form of society itself. We have had, actually for many years, two moralities which dovetail into each other: the Christian morality of submission and the capitalist morality of self-help. The first is aimed at the working class, inculcating unthinking acceptance of the social framework. The other, for the bourgeoisie, offers hope of escape from drudgery and frustration through the acquisition of wealth by hard work, saving and cleverness. There has always been a certain conflict between these two aspects of morality—a conflict glossed over by hypocrisy

and the observance of 'Sunday' religion. But as far as action is concerned, the Christian religion had long ceased to interfere with business practice or business morality. Conventional Christian morality had lost whatever it had had of a positive character, in seeking the Kingdom of God on earth, and had become entirely negative as a series of avoidances of certain acts—murder, stealing, adultery—leaving men free to pursue wealth and make their fortunes within the bounds of a very lax commercial law. Some of the prohibitions of religion were old agreements necessary to preserve any human society from the recurrent violence of blood feuds, but most referred to the breaking of conventions necessary for a reliable commercial intercourse. The positive elements of actual morality were exclusively economic—at least to pay one's way, to support one's wife and family; at the best to make one's fortune and achieve success.

We have been trained, of course, not to consider these positive elements as morality at all, but simply as things that everybody did and we ought to do ourselves. Officially, morality was confined to the avoidance of certain sins. That hypocrisy must be seen through before we can begin to appreciate the new morality which must grow up to fit a new state of society, for that morality must be essentially integral and positive. It must no longer consist of two parts, one publicly admitted, the other privately acted upon, but must unite action and belief. Liberty in its capitalist sense is really an expression of the negative aspect of morality, which says in effect—you must avoid certain things and for the rest you may do exactly as you like. An integral and positive morality says, on the other hand—there are certain things to be done and you should avoid anything which interferes with the doing of them.

The central demand of the new morality is that we should work our best with our fellows for a common purpose. This implies many demands both on the individual and on society that were never made before. It demands goodwill and co-operation; it demands intelligence and initiative; it demands unlimited responsibility for action. These are not separate demands but linked closely with each other. The new society is not a society of instinctive robots like those of bees and ants: it is one of conscious and diverse human beings. It is not one ruled by a 'führer princip' in which each man is only responsible for carrying out the demands imposed on him by his superior. It is

up to everyone to find his own place and to do his best in it, not for himself but for the society of his fellows.

That demands that he must think as well as act. He must understand what the aims of society are and he must contribute, not only to what that society is doing at a given time, but to what it is trying to do. He must help to change its course, to regulate its development. As Lenin said, 'every cook must learn to rule the State'. A society guided by this morality is not one in which the individual is reduced to impotence but, on the contrary, one in which the individual has more scope for his individuality and at the same time is required to use his gifts more strenuously than in any earlier form of human society. The older moralities of humility and self-abasement are as much out of place in the new society as the later ones of independence and self-seeking.

#### SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF MORALITY

To be fully effective such morality can only grow out of the society which fosters it. The demand that every citizen should know and understand implies an educational system which permits and helps—as our educational system does not—everyone to learn easily and naturally the function of society and the place he can find in it. The demand that every citizen should willingly play his part in the productive machine implies that the economic form of society itself is acceptable morally, as even the Churches are finding out that our present economy is not.

Only in the new society will man be able to recover a morality free from hypocrisy and conflict. However hard and restricted savage life was, it at least had that basic human fellowship that was destroyed at the beginning of civilization through the institution of property and the growth of class divisions. Engels, in *The Origin of the Family*, foresaw that, once mankind had, through society, emancipated itself from the need of drudgery for the subsistence of the many and the comfort of the few, it would be possible to recapture unalloyed the savage virtues of fellowship, kindness and hospitality.

At bottom morality is not a question of codes or principles or even of reason: it is the expression of human feelings in behaviour to others. But the world of feeling as shown in personal relations, in art and religious experience, is nothing set apart from the material and economic world of fact. The old separation of matter

and spirit has no longer any basis in knowledge. The distinction is real—spirit stands for the social elements in humanity—but underlying it is the close relation between these and productive mechanism.

The separation of matter and spirit also fatally confuses our handling of the problem of values. To the idealist the materialist seems to lay all his emphasis on the achievement of crude satisfactions of money, food or sex and to ignore the higher spiritual values. This accusation, which never fitted even the mechanical materialists of the last century, is completely inapplicable to the dialectical materialist of the present time. Actually by not recognizing spiritual things as predominantly social, the idealists have been forced into what is effectively a materialist position; that is, treating spiritual things as if they were some kind of material with certain properties: different material and different properties than those of crude matter but equally absolute and equally unrelated to human beings and their history. It is no use realizing instinctively and proving metaphysically that spiritual affairs are more important than material affairs when this realization does not bring any power to achieve those spiritual aims. As long as spiritual things are not realized as socially directed, spiritual action is the only means available of achieving them, and however this may succeed in individual cases, apart from the deceptions of yoga and asceticism in producing beautiful lives, it has not only failed to advance spiritual values generally, but actively opposed the conditions necessary for their development. It is no accident that St. Francis, the founder of mediæval mystical piety, and St. Dominic, the founder of the Inquisition, were men of the same age. Spiritual ends are higher than crude material ends, not on account of any mystical quality but because they are essentially social ends, and society is a later and more complicated phase of universal history. But because they are social ends they must be realized by social means, that is, at the present time, by the conscious organization of society which includes the necessary provision of the material basis for that society. This end cannot be achieved any longer unconsciously and by individual action. The value of the individual is still the highest value but only through and in the society which has made him and which he makes.

Our values in art or conduct are conditioned by social history and react on it. The achievement of the best social environment is



an aim inseparable from that of the best biological environment. At the time when individual material gain seemed to be the only thing worth struggling for, the teaching of Jesus stressed the need to think first of our neighbours. And our neighbour was not a relation or a tribesman, but any man in the world. The teaching was ineffective in practice in capitalist society because the whole motive power of human action was geared to economic self-interest. Within the new productive organization, based on human co-operation and using the means provided by science, the teaching of Jesus can come into its own. Ethics, the pursuit of the good things, furnished nothing but insoluble conundrums in a class society where one man's good created another man's want. In the new society it can be studied and practised at the same time.

### THE NEEDS OF THE MOMENT

If the full development of the new morality must await the new society, it is by no means a Utopian morality. It would be a fatal error to assume that we must first form a perfect State before men themselves can be perfected. The essential features of the new morality are in fact growing up inside the forms of the old order just as they grew up among the revolutionaries in Czarist Russia. The war itself is already becoming a great transformer of morality. Individual self-seeking, so extolled in peace, has become a nuisance and is rapidly becoming a crime in war. In exhorting people to work together, to sacrifice themselves, to think and plan intelligently because the war demands it, a radical break is being made with the old morality and one which it will be difficult to reverse. It would be a complete illusion, however, to think that this change has yet come about; it took men years of revolution and hardship to bring it about in the Soviet Union. Nevertheless it is on its way now throughout the world, and the more clearly people see it and its implications the more rapidly and smoothly will it be accepted.

The struggles of the present time are the end point of the whole sequence of earlier struggles and the start for new efforts. But understanding this will be of no use—indeed it will be no true understanding—if it does not march with the new activity needed for the immediate situation. To say that we are in the midst of the transformation towards a conscious society self-ordered for common good, is meaningless—even made untrue—in so far as

we are not ourselves working to achieve that society. It will come only as a result of conscious, intelligent and co-operative effort by all of us.

At the moment the tasks before us are simple and clear. It is first of all necessary to destroy the forces that are openly trying to rush the new development. But it is not only necessary to work for the ultimate defeat of the Fascist powers: they must be defeated at once, so that the material and human possibilities for the new world are not heavily compromised by the losses of the struggle.

Every month of inaction, of preparation for actions which are continually put off into the future, means loss not only of materials for building a new world, but of the irreplaceable human beings on whom we are counting to build it. Every month lost increases the problems that will have to be faced later. It deepens hatreds and adds to the difficulties of achieving the willing collaboration that will be needed. It is no use thinking at this stage of the world conflict that by refraining from action now we may hope to preserve our own lives and possessions and let other people make the sacrifices. This view is even more foolish than it is contemptible; and yet, not reacting now, not participating in forcing the authorities to act, is equivalent to joining this tacit conspiracy of inaction.

The defeat of the Axis powers is not only an affair of the battlefield or even of the machine shop; the enemies of the new world are not all on the other side of the Channel; the enemies are among us and in us. The failures and defeats which have been suffered by the older democracies are not accidental. They are intrinsic to a system which belongs to an earlier age and cannot cope with the requirements of the present struggle. We must learn to understand and destroy the forces that belong to the past and are leading to defeat. There is no lack of courage; no lack of resignation and endurance; but they are neutralized by the effects of private greed and class interests and must overcome a widespread inactive pathy and frustration. The ruling class of this country did not go into the war to save democracy; they do not know what democracy is and if they did they would not like it. They went into the war to save their status, their pockets and their skins, and even in the war they have not forgotten that their position has to be secure, not only against the enemy, but against each other and against the common people. Hence the picture of protests against excess profits tax and coal rationing; the refusal to accept

any effective and long-overdue social changes in wartime; the organization of production to preserve peacetime interests: or the Government controls of industry handed over to the biggest monopoly industrialists. Hence the important and dangerous confusion and delay in the production of war materials and in the full realization of productive potential. Class vested interests in the civil service and the fighting services have resulted in our slow and unadaptable response to modern fighting conditions on land, sea and air.

The whole strategy of the war as well as its tactics bears witness to this unready and laggard spirit. We have failed for eighteen months to assist the only ally that can and has resisted the Nazis. Ostensibly this is for tactical reasons; we are told we have been unprepared and we are still unprepared for a second front in Europe. The way things are going, and with the people we have directing them, there is no guarantee that we will not always be in this state. Men who do not know what they are fighting for or who suspect that the ends of the war are not their ends, cannot and will not direct it effectively. They are not traitors: they do not willingly assist the enemy, but they will not press things unduly, they will not take risks, they will not demand the impossible, they will not ruthlessly dismiss and degrade those incompetent to deal with the problems of modern war: worst of all, they will not trust the people.

But the lukewarmness and inadequacy of the ruling class would not have been able to reduce us to the dangerous state we are now in if they had been balanced from the outset by the initiative and action of the great mass of the people, particularly of the working class. For years, the organized working classes, the Trades Unions and Labour Party, in this country as in the other older democracies, have tacitly accepted an inferior position. They have compounded with their rulers in consideration of receiving a slightly greater share of real goods and civic amenities. Social change was thought of as a gradual process by which the evils of the present would be removed without the necessity of violent action and with no discomfort to anybody. When the state of the world outside seemed to show increasingly the danger in which the whole of society stood, Labour leaders simply refused to consider it and surrendered even more of their powers to a ruling class which they were willing to believe would be



able to defend them. All these attitudes were easy; they were impressed on the people by the whole propaganda mechanism of a modern commercialized State. But they were accepted by, and indeed almost violently forced on, the more conscious sections of the working class by the Labour and Socialist leadership, more concerned with ingratiating themselves with Capitalists than with securing the interests of their class and with it that of the whole people. One result of refusing to face the facts of the situation was the loss of ability to think at all on social questions. Neither the people nor their leaders had any social philosophy, and the latter were even proud of the fact and spent what little intellectual energy they had in attacking Marxism, which presented the only coherent account of society and its changes.

The attitude of the years between the wars is still persisting through the war itself; it is an attitude which begins with apathy and ends with frustration. In the army, in the factories, men and women are conscious that things are not going well and that if it had not been for the Soviet Union they would now be feeling the consequences; but this knowledge, if it only leads to depression and pointless anger, will do no good. What is needed is action and not complaint. The people have the possibility of showing what they can do, not only in the endurance of calamity, for which their rulers are duly grateful to them, but in the achieving of victory by their own efforts and for their own good. The initiative now is with the people. It is for the people themselves—for the workers in the factories—to see that production is brought to its full pitch and expanded continuously:—and for all, by every and any means to see that the politics, the diplomacy and the strategy of the country are woven together into an intelligent and forceful co-ordinated effort with the people of the Soviet Union and of the United Nations. It is not enough to have a great leader. We need leadership from below as well as from above; individual initiative, group initiative—all must find channels to make themselves felt effectively. Acceptance of a situation as grave as this is simply a lazy form of treachery. The will is there; the men and the ability are there; they are not yet sufficiently aware of their power or of their unity—but that is coming. Our problem is to see that it comes fast enough to meet the tide of enemy attack and, having met it, to sweep it back . . . and then to start our great task of building a new and greater society.



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